ふつのせんじつ 4

夏の前日

吉田基已

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それは、ある日突然だった。

「はなみ」が、霧の彼方へ、小早川家を挟んで二周れた。

智生のこの瞬をよみがえらせる事地、鼻がとてもれたような、幸にやさしくしたい、最のこだわりを考えていたはずなのに——。

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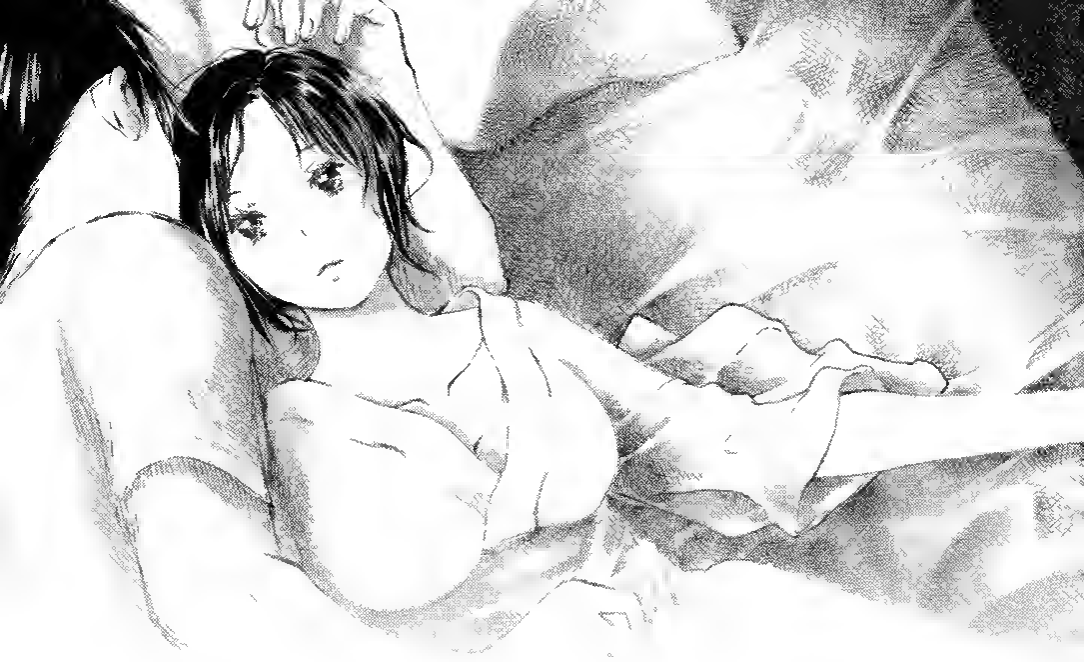

good! AFTERNOON KC

夏の前日 4

「なつのぜんじつ」

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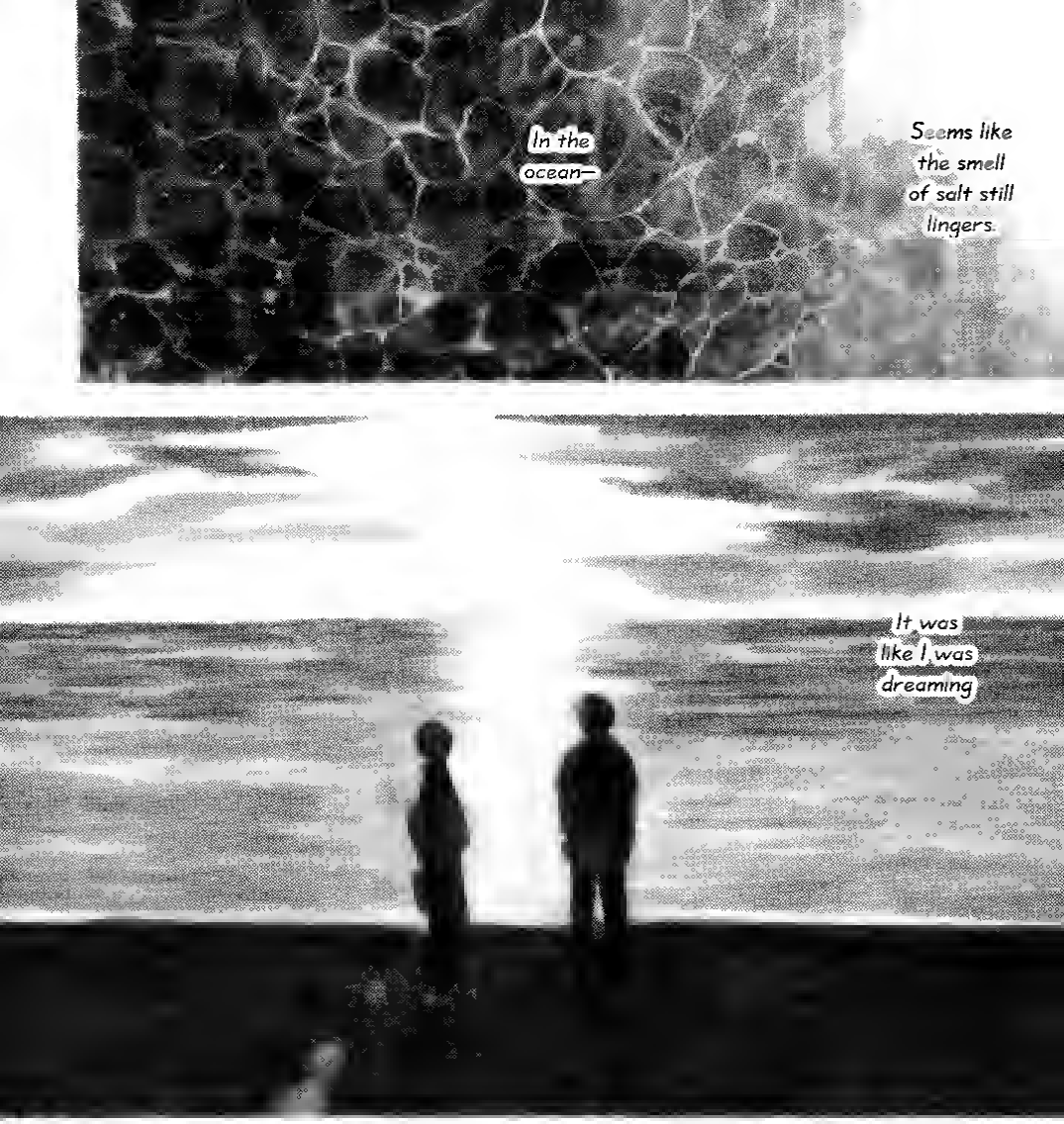
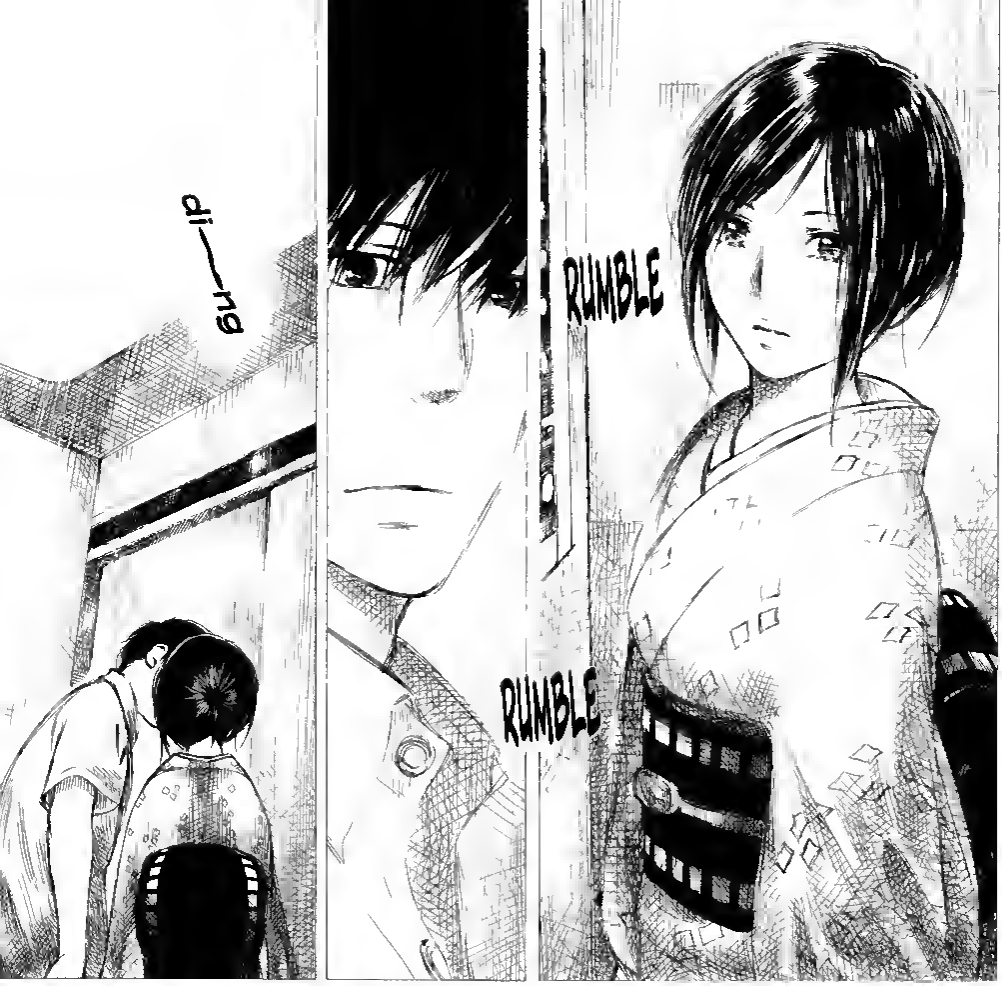
RAIN...
...
OH...



She had meant to see me home before she went home herself

Yesterday, Akira was so gentle and nice the whole time.


RUMBLE
RUMBLE

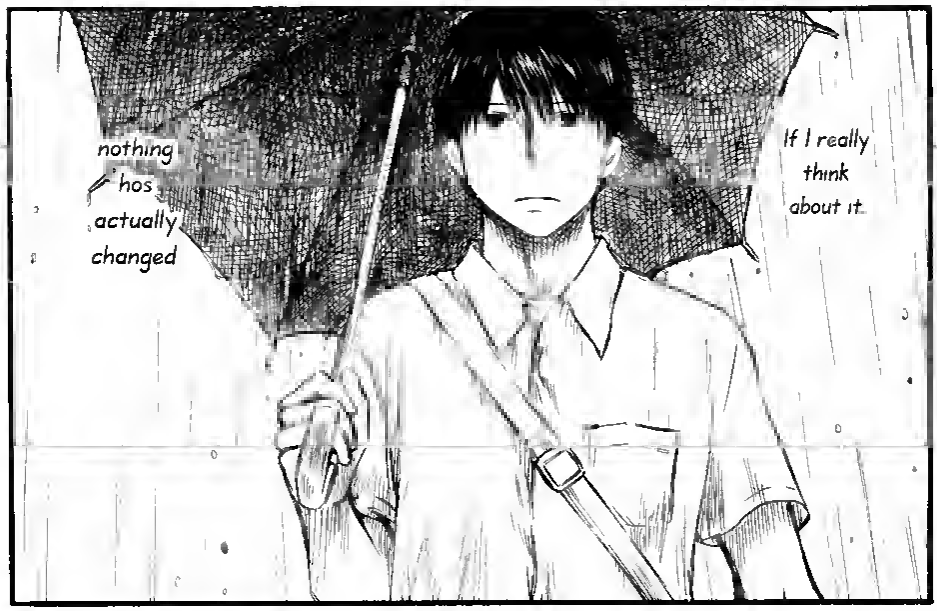
JUST A KISS...
WE CAN'T?
JUST A KISS?
...JUST A KISS.

[CHAPTER 19] Waking up from a dream

shhhh
beep
sigh
thunk
shuffle
shuffle
...
sshhh

scrape
scrape
Had she always been this way for me?
WHEN?
YEAH.
MINE?
JUST EARLIER.
NO WAY. YOU WERE SLEEPING.
munch
I SAW YOUR SLEEPING FACE
...
OF COURSE YOU WERE.
I HAD A BEAUTIFUL SLEEPING FACE, DIDN'T I?
MAYBE I WAS DREAMING, THEN.
Akira
Is really cute.
IT WAS A DREAM, SO IT'S FINE, RIGHT?
LIES!
YOU WERE DROOLING.

SSSHHH
TODAY MARKS THE BEGINNING OF JULY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN ONLY SEE SHEETS OF RAIN HERE OUTSIDE THE STUDIO.
INOUE-KUN, COULD YOU FLIP THE CALENDAR PAGE FOR ME?
AH, SURE!
IT LOOKS LIKE WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT OUT THE RAINY SEASON...
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
WESTERN ART RESEARCH DEPT
SPLASH
SPLASH
Fwip—
SUMMER IS STILL A WAYS OFF, HUH?



I know what this is. This is just that phenomenon you get when the fans of an idol rage once they've found out that she's got a lover.

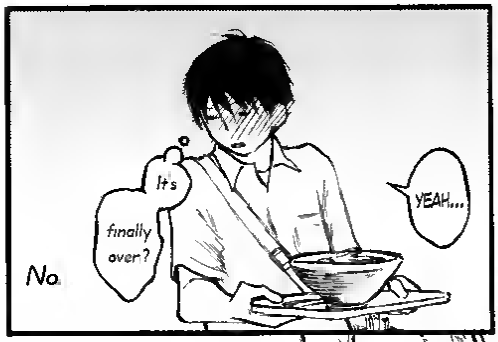
It just so happens that Hanami is now Mori's girlfriend. This in effect is simply now a part of what "Hanami" is

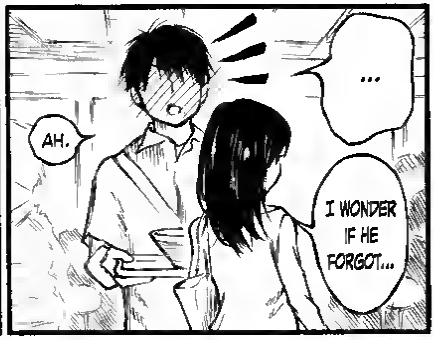
I've got someone I want to treasure
I think. that was the first time I've seen her sleeping face.
If I think about this carefully this actually isn't a problem at all
Mori's relationships have nothing to da with me
It's none of my business
食券
and nothing will even change from how it was before
I just won't contact them from my end—
AOKI -SAN.

LOOM
LOO
OOM

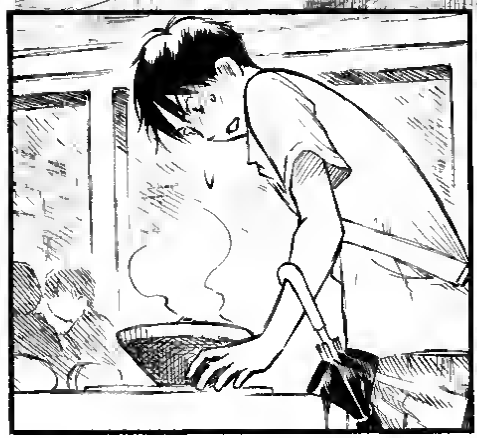
SHE'S HERE
DO YOU KNOW WHERE MORI IS?
.....
.....
GEEZ~ WHERE THE HECK DID HE GO...?
shake
shake
shake
GO AHEAD AND EAT.
AH, YES. I'M SORRY.
THE NOODLES WILL GET SOGGY...
Hurry.
...
IS THAT ALL?
...
growl~

I'D PROMISED WITH MORI THAT WE'D EAT TOGETHER, BUT I CAN'T FIND HIM ANYWHERE!
YOU'RE TOTALLY RIGHT!!
EATEN YET, UH—
IF YOU HAVEN'T
...
Must run away!


No.
It's finally over?
YEAH...


AH.
...
I WONDER IF HE FORGOT...

BYE...
No, no, no! It's because she's looking for someone that she



ARE YOU EATING ALL BY YOURSELF?!

HUH? MORI'S ACTUALLY IN THE LIGHT MUSIC CLUB?
I get it
What!?
I COULDN'T DO THAT BY MYSELF...
!?
Cool?!
WHOA~ SO COOL!
GO AHEAD AND START EATING!
I'LL GO AND GET SOME TEA!
I JUST CAN'T GET A GOOD HANDLE ON HIS WANDERING...
She just wanted to ask about Mori.
NAH, I DON'T THINK HE'S OFFICIALLY IN IT...
BUT, HE "STILL HANGS OUT IN THEIR ROOM SOMETIMES"...

It'll be alright
IT FEELS LIKE MORI'S GOT TONS OF FRIENDS, OR LIKE HE KNOWS AND TALKS TO EVERYONE AROUND CAMPUS, DOESN'T HE?
AH, YEAH. HE DOES LIKE TO POKE HIS NOSE IN EVERYONE'S BUSINESS.
I'm talking with her normally, and there's nothing weird about it
No matter how I look at this, I'll be fine
BU—
BUT, AREN'T YOU HIS CLOSEST BUDDY, OUT OF EVERYONE ELSE?
NAH, I'M NOT.
NO WAY?!
BUT I HEARD THAT YOU TWO WERE FRIENDS SINCE YOU WERE KIDS?!

I DOUBT HE THINKS SO HIGHLY OF ME...
IT'S JUST THAT WE'VE BEEN AROUND EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME.
I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT IF YOU WERE, I'D BE—
Are there rumors of this?!
Hold on, what did you just say?!
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU'RE GAY?
PFF—
I AM DEFINITELY NOT GAY.

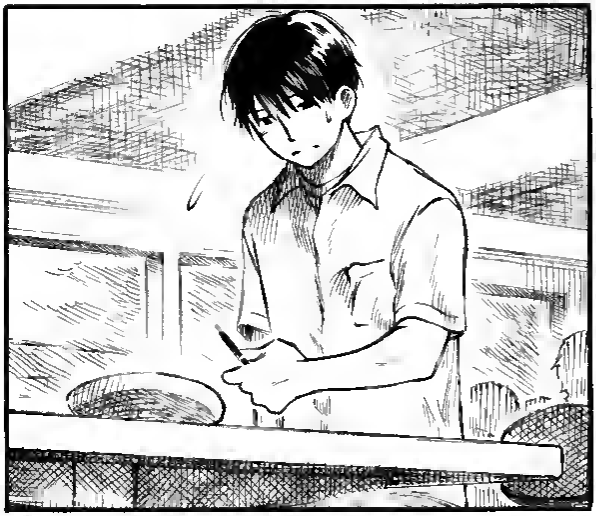
I DON'T.
BUT IT'S TOTALLY AS IF YOU LIKE HIM, ISN'T IT?!
What is even going on here?
SIZZLE
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT YOU HATED ME FOR SOME REASON.
...
BUT IT'S FINE, SO LONG AS YOU AREN'T MY RIVAL!

YOU DON'T WHEN YOU'RE WITH MORI, RIGHT?
SO, UH...
IT'S MORE RELAXED FOR US IF WE JUST TALK NORMALLY, TOO.
"best fr! nds" or "gay" or what ver
"Like" or "Dislike"
How can she attempt to try and place someone just based on a single phrase like that?
Y'KNOW,
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SPEAK SO FORMALLY ALL THE TIME.
Well.
...
But there's no use trying to stay all unfriendly, either
I MEAN—
OKAY!
I SEE...
There's no need to get all buddy-buddy with her.

What
ISN'T IT HARD TO CALL ME "KOBAYAKAWA" ALL THE TIME?
YOU TOO, THEN!
EVERYONE CALLS ME BY MY FIRST NAME,
SO, YOU SHOULD, TOO!

...
HANA -CHAN!
OH, WERE YOU EATING LUNCH WITH AOKI-KUN?
NO—
I'M THE ONE THAT'S BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!!
MORI!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!

SEE YOU LATER!
AH...
Now I want to eat ramen
Sorry did u wait?
HA—



CLATTER

「HANAMI」

By name

IS IT JUST ME, OR IS AOKI-SAN ACTUALLY A GOOD PERSON...?
SEE, I'VE BEEN TELLIN' YOU HE'S A GOOD GUY FROM THE VERY BEGINNING!

HANAMI.
Hanami
"Call me by name," she said.

WOOSH
I'm surprised
THIS IS...
NOT GOOD.

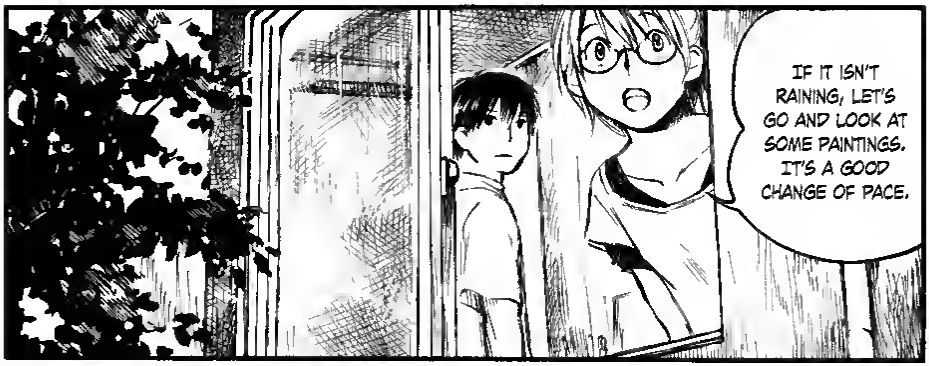
That instant.
When I said her name out loud...
It's like she became real
WHAT AM I SAYING?
Of course she's real
RIGHT...
This...
Is neither dream nor nightmare
It's reality.

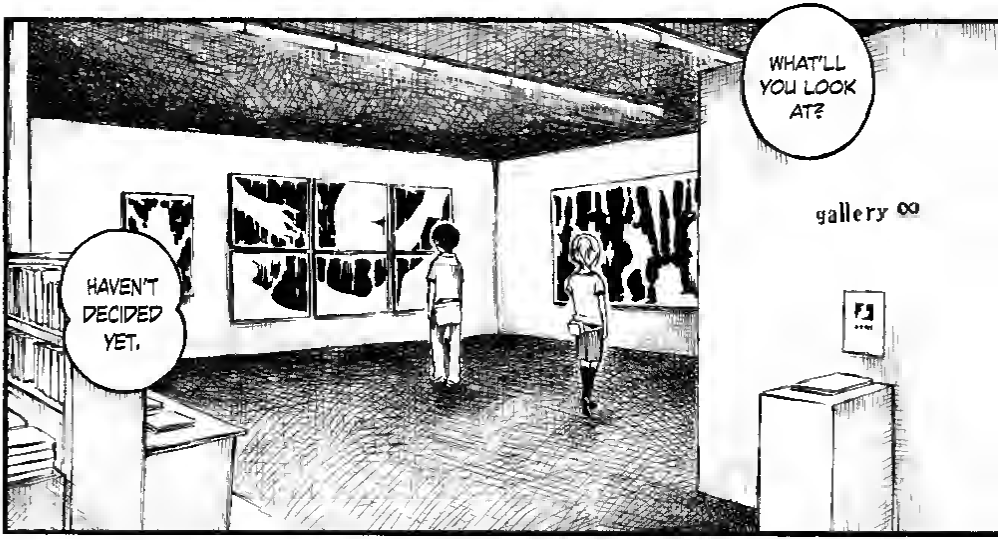
[CHAPTER 20]

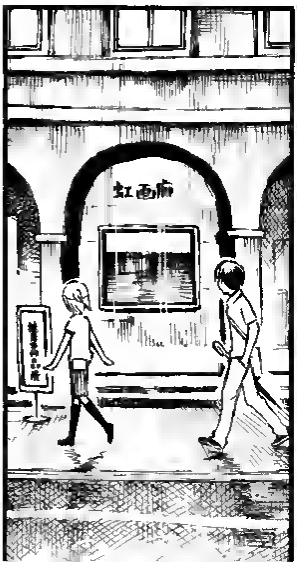
I'll let you spoil me

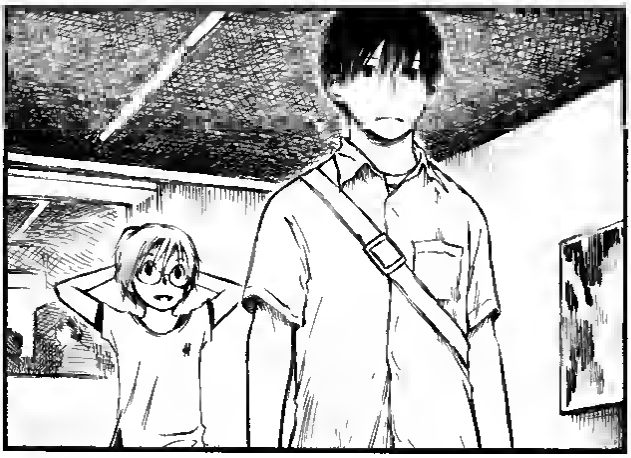
SORRY, NEVERMIND. I SAW NOTHING, I SAW NOTHING.
WHAT KINDA TRASH IS THAT?!

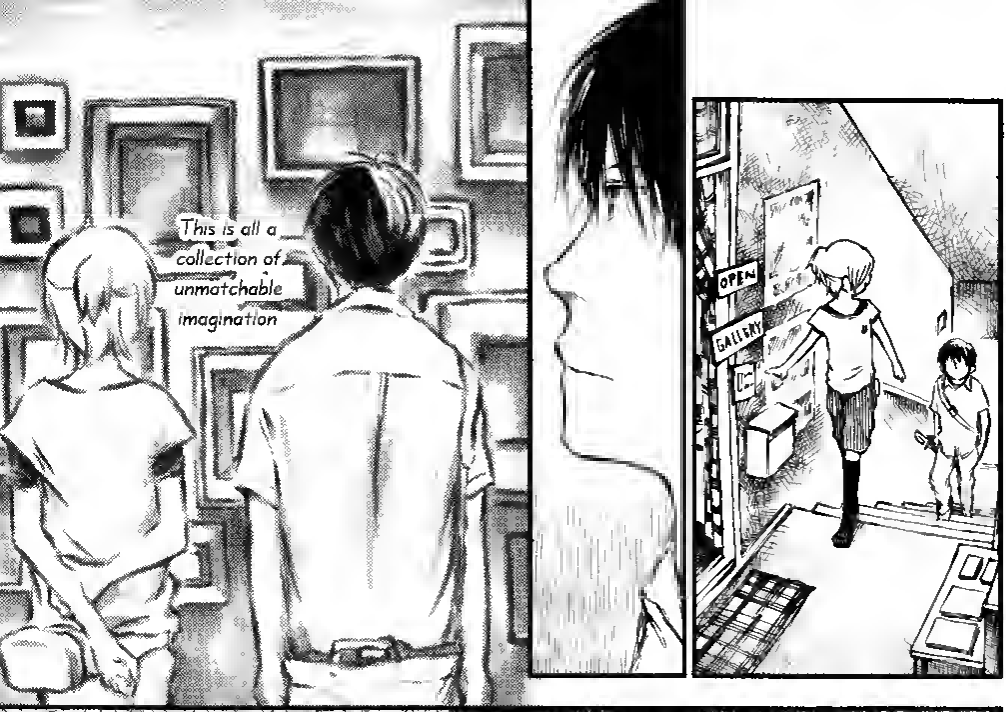
Hanami...
I got caught...
No
It's
"Kobayakawa"
YOU THINK IT'LL RAIN ANY MORE TODAY, CHIEF?
WHO'RE YOU CALLIN' CHIEF?
This has probably turned into a troublesome situation


IF IT ISN'T RAINING, LET'S GO AND LOOK AT SOME PAINTINGS. IT'S A GOOD CHANGE OF PACE.


WHAT'LL YOU LOOK AT?
gallery ∞
HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.



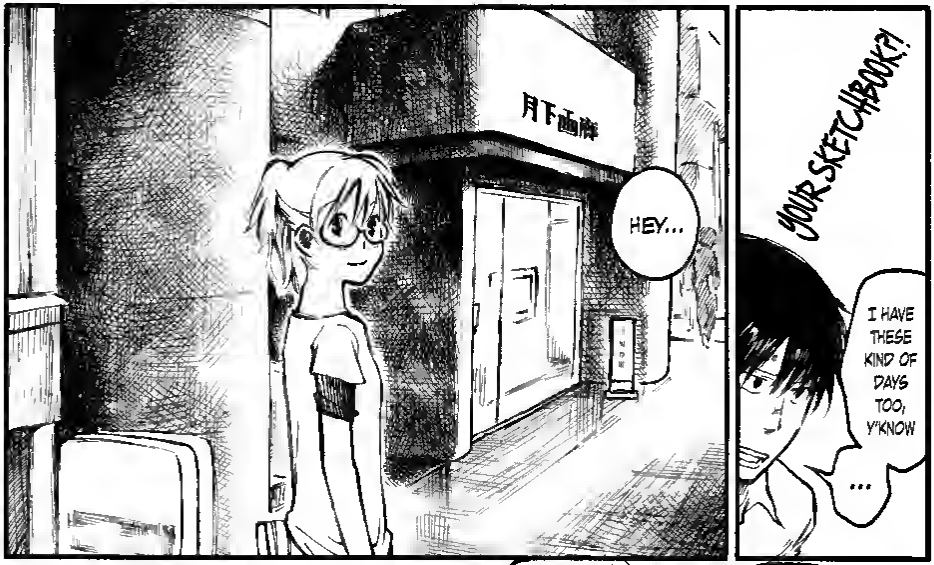


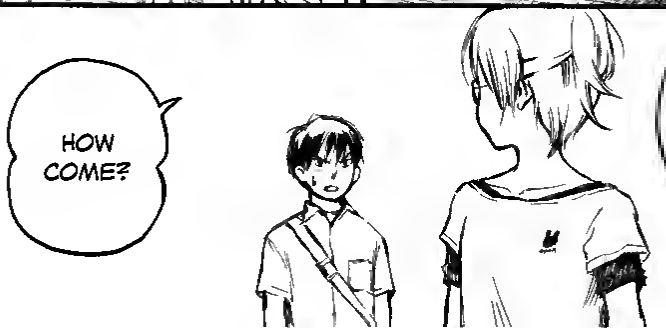

This is all a collection of unmatchable imagination
OPEN
GALLERY

SIGN: USEP BOOKS
古書
What exactly are we doing out here?

I DIDN'T BRING MY SKETCHBOOK TODAY, EITHER.
...I FORGOT IT.
YOU FORGOT? YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE?!
...
"CHANGE OF PACE."
YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH SPARE TIME TO READ BOOKS?!
100 YEN

SIGN: MOONLIT GALLERY





AKIRA'S PROBABLY IN HER OFFICE, ANYWAY.
EH, WHATEVER.
Ah!!
I UNDERSTAND. I WILL GO.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, EXACTLY?
ARE YOU BEING CHASED BY SOME KIND OF EVIL ORGANIZATION?!
!?
IT'S OK. LET'S GO.
WHAT!?
NOTHING...
...
EH? WHAT?!
!?
SO, YOU TRAVELLED ALL THE WAY TO YAMAOKU'S STUDIO?!
...

IT'S MY OWN FAULT FOR NOT PROPERLY HANDLING THE TRADE IN THE FIRST PLACE.
THE WHOLE THING IS WHY IT'S FAMOUS IN THE FIRST PLACE! AND TO SAY HE ONLY WANTS THAT ONE...
THE PIECE HE WANTS IS PART OF A COLLECTION!
THAT CUSTOMER IS JUST BEING SELFISH!
I WOULDN'T PUT IT SO HARSHLY.
HE HAS HIS CIRCUMS-TANCES.
THANK YOU FOR WORKING SO LATE TODAY, MIYA-CHAN.
I CAN HANDLE THINGS FROM HERE.
月下画廊
BUT WE STILL SETTLED IT ALRIGHT, DIDN'T WE?
SIGN: MOONLIT GALLERY
Oh no
Smile smile!
sniff

Even though it was just yesterday
It feels like it was so long ago
I wonder if he's here...?
He was smiling this morning. afterall
I wanted to get home early and cook for Tetsuo todoy..
I guess I was being too optimistic
Wouldn't it be nice if I got married to tetsuo?
Yes.
A bride's love story..
That's right.
My husband is a painter..
Then I'd be able to be with him all the time.
PREGNANT
Haa~
When I'm tired,
It seems I think of some really stupid things...

GOOD WORK.
...
I JUST GOT HERE.
IT WAS PRETTY HOT OUT, WASN'T IT?
YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ME?!
YOU SHOULD HAVE JUST COME INSIDE...
DID YOU BEHAVE YOURSELF TODAY?

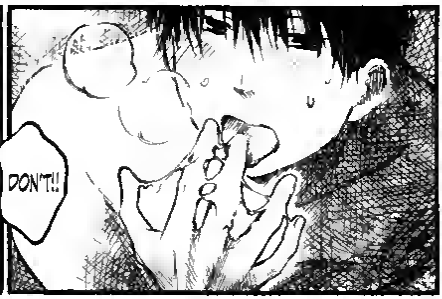
What if.
I'LL COOK DINNER.
SOME-THING LIKE THAT.
...she had trouble at work today because she was too busy worrying about me?
SURE.
CAN WE HAVE SOME?
I WANT TO EAT WATER-MELON.
As if.
Thinking about it as if it were my fault
would be a little impudent, I guess.
She never really does complain to me
About her problems and struggles at work.

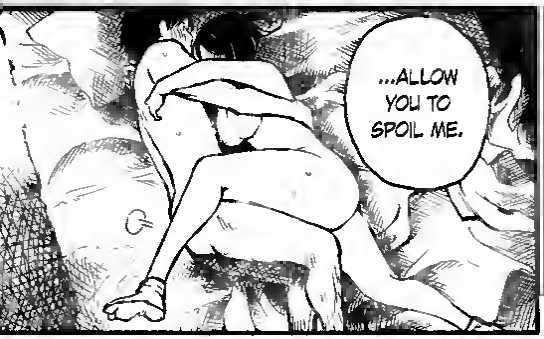
HM?
Wonder if I'd even understand if she did tell me..
pet
pet
pet
pet
pet
pet
pet

ER...
DID YOU WANT TO SPOIL ME THIS BADLY?
WHAT'S THIS?
YEAH.
LET ME.
HOW?
SILLY!
THAT'S JUST...

NN...
YOU'RE NOT?
MN...
SLEEPY?
...AH!

IDIOT...

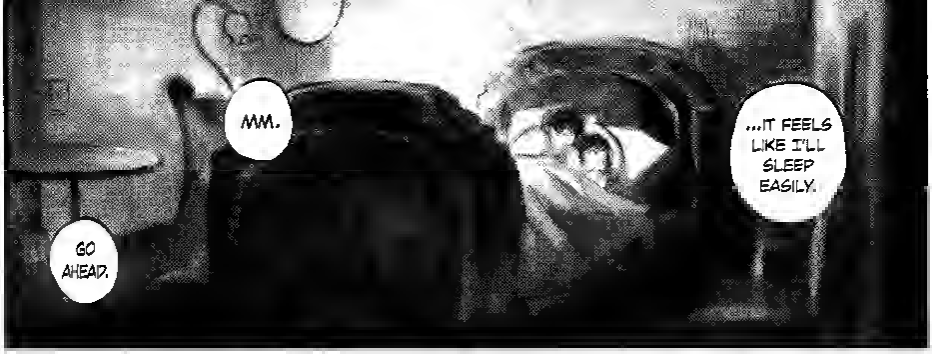

DON'T!!


...ALLOW YOU TO SPOIL ME.

I'LL...

YEAH.

HAA
HAHH!
HA—
AH
AHH!
LIKE THIS...
pet
pet
pet
pet
pet



Eating

Sleeping

They become priceless

When you put such meaningless words together

I want to take good care of her
The way she did for me
IS THAT ENOUGH FOR YOU TO EAT?
IT'S ENOUGH.
THANK YOU, FATHER.
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU SAYING?

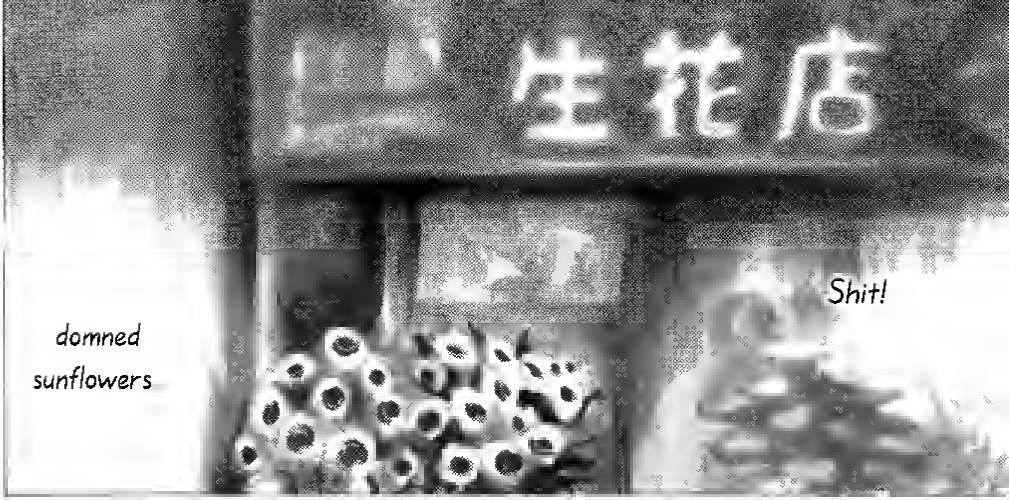
EAT WELL.
I'M GOING.
WELL, I'M GONNA HEAD OUT FIRST.
I JUST WANTED TO HEAD HOME AND SHOWER FIRST.
YOU WERE IN A HURRY?!
NO, NO.
Even though I wanted to only think of Akira

"Did you behave yourself today?"

...Why was it that I wanted to paint the sunflowers so much...?

[CHAPTER 21]

Hanami


生花店
Shit!
domned sunflowers

HM? HE'S GONE.

WANNA EAT LUNCH TOGETHER?
AOKI -KU~N

I WONDER IF HE'S OUT TO GET SOME AIR?

STOP TRYING TO LOOK ALL COOL AND ACT NORMALLY!

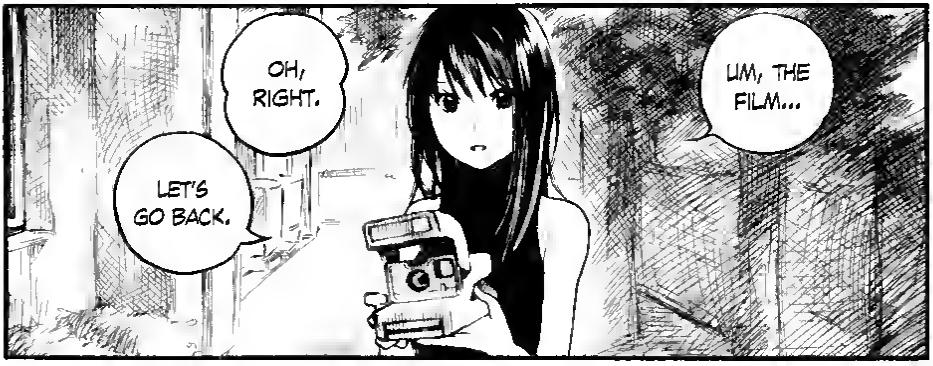
HAHA, SO STUPID!

WELL Y'KNOW, MY COOLNESS JUST NATURALLY SURFACES LIKE THIS...

AH.
IT'S TETSUO -KUN.
S-S-S-S-SORRY!!
UM, I-I...
MORI- —TOLD ME YOUR NAME, AND...
THAT'S RIGHT. AOKI-KUN'S NAME IS TETSUO.

KOBAYA-KAWA.
...GOOD TIMING,
AUGH
WHUMP
RIGHT? TETSUO -KUN!
YOU FORGOT THIS.
WOAH, HOLD IT.
WELL THEN—
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
?
...
I GUESS I FORGOT THIS IN THE CAFETERIA YESTERDAY!

HANA -CHAN, HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?


OH, RIGHT.
LET'S GO BACK.
UM, THE FILM...

HANA-CHAN ASKED IF SHE COULD TAKE PICTURES OF OUR BAND, REMEMBER?
EH?
...HELP?
COME ON, DIDN'T YOU AGREE TO HELP US WITH THIS?
WHAT IS IT...
JUST ACT NOR-MALLY...

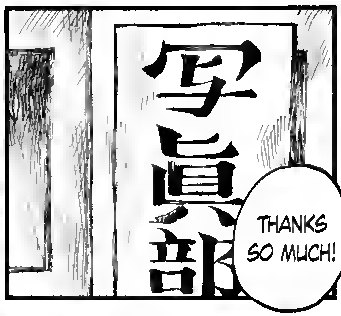
Rotten fish
I wasn't listening
The face of someone with absolutely no excuses
.....
.....
DON'T YOU REMEMBER THAT DAY WHERE YOUR EYES LOOKED LIKE A ROTTEN FISH'S? WERE YOU NOT LISTENING TO ANYTHING AT ALL?!
I'M IN THE PHOTO-GRAPHY CLUB.
AH...
HUH?
SO THAT'S WHY YOU WERE CARRYING AROUND AN SLR CAMERA...
SEE?
THIS ONE HERE'S A POLAROID.
WELL, I DO HAVE ONE...
OR WAS IT SOME-THING ELSE...
...
ARE THOSE...

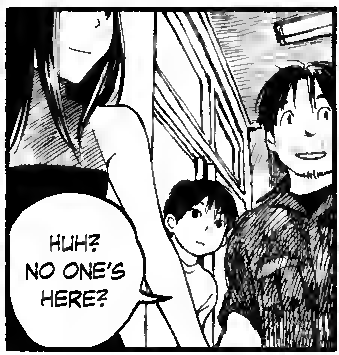
...ALL TAKEN BY KOBAYA-KAWA?
SEE?
SEE?
AREN'T THEY AMAZING?
WHY'RE THEY ALL YOU...
U-
UM...
Gulp
.....
.....
.....
He even looks kind of cool

DO YOU HAVE ANY MORE?
AS A GRADUATION PROJECT,
I WAS HOPING THAT YOU GUYS WOULD ALLOW ME TO DESIGN THINGS FOR YOUR BAND.
SO, STUFF LIKE ADS AND POSTERS?
RIGHT!
I'LL ALSO BE ABLE TO GET LOTS OF PHOTOS OF THE BAND IN ACTION, TOO.
WHEN I SAW YOU GUYS PLAYING LAST TIME,
I KNEW I DEFINITELY WANTED TO DO THIS.
WELL THEN, MAKE A CD COVER TOO.
CAN I?!
I SEE...
She returned to using formal speech

Wow..
Photos, huh..
And even design...

SOMEONE'S USING THE DARKROOM.
IS IT SOKABE-KUN?
COULD BE.


写真部
THANKS SO MUCH!


HUH? NO ONE'S HERE?

MORI, CAN YOU GET ME THAT BAG?
THIS ONE?
YEAH...
GO AHEAD AND JUST SIT WHEREVER.

A BUNCH OF THESE AREN'T EVEN SORTED...
MM...
THAT'S THE AKATSUKI SHOPPING DISTRICT.
OOH, YOU COULD TELL?
AH, THEN THIS IS THAT BATH HOUSE WHERE MORI GOES ALL THE TIME.
HEY, THAT'S RIGHT!

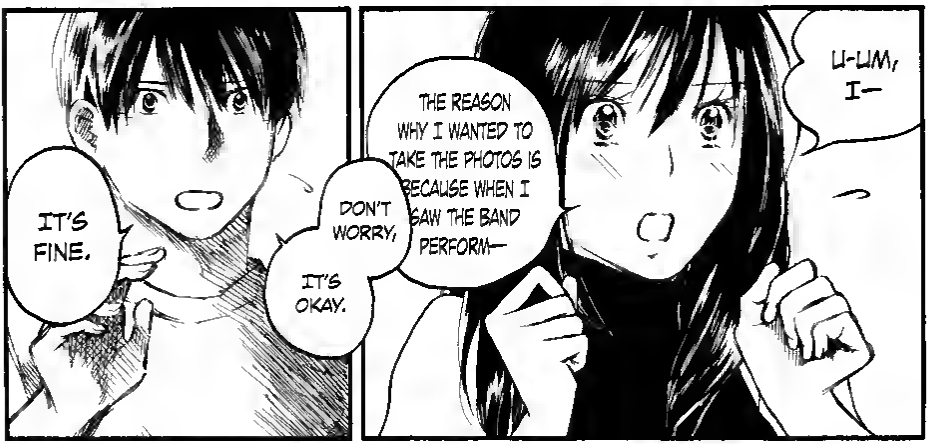
...
I REALLY LIKE THIS ONE.
...
WHAT A GREAT PHOTO!
SO HOT!!!
SLAM
DARK ROOM
THAT'S RIGHT, I JUST ASK THEM IF I CAN TAKE A PHO—
HM?
FOR PICTURES LIKE THIS...
ARE YOU JUST ASKING RANDOM PEOPLE ON THE STREET TO TAKE PHOTOS OF?
WHAT?! ARE YOU SAYING YOU WANNA TREAT ME?!
MORI-SAN, CAN YOU PLEASE BUY ME SOME ICE CREAM?
NO CAN DO.
DID YOU DIE? COME BACK TO LIFE~
I'M DYING.
HEY THERE. SO IT *WAS* SOKABE -KUN.

SOKABE-SAN, THIS CAMERA...
AHH, SEE? IT WASN'T BROKEN, RIGHT?
YEAH, IT WAS FINE.
WELL, IT WORKED, BUT IT'S SO DARN HEAVY.
THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S GOT THE HEART AND SOUL OF AN INSTANT CAMERA PACKED IN THERE WITH IT.
LIKE, DREAMS?
OR LOVE.
HOW ABOUT ROMANCE?
SEE, NOW YOU'RE TALKIN'!

HE'S THE ONE THAT LET ME BORROW THIS CAMERA.
I SEE...
NAH, I'M GOOD.
AND FOR YOU?
YOU'RE GONNA PAY ME BACK, RIGHT?!
SO,
WHO'S GONNA GO AND BUY ME ICE CREAM?
SOKABE-KUN, THANK YOU SO MUCH!!
WHA—
I WANT STRAW-BERRY MILK!
ARE YOU SERIOUS?!

I'LL BE GOING.
THANKS FOR INVITING ME.
OH, AND THANKS FOR LETTING ME SEE YOUR WORK.
AOKI -SAN!

SIGN: PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB



I DON'T REALLY KNOW MUCH ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY, SO...

...
...I MEAN
HOW DO I PUT THIS...

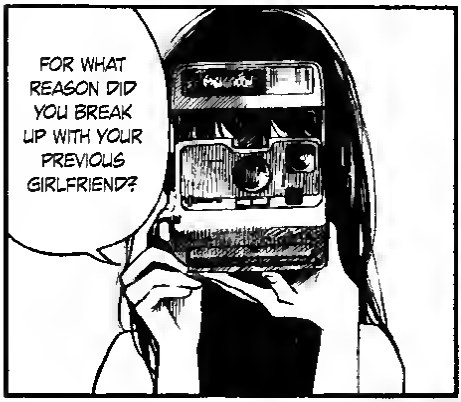
FREELY TAKE AS MANY PHOTOS AS YOU WANT.
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO DO, THEN THAT IS BEST.

I'M PRETTY AWFUL WITH WORDS AT TIMES LIKE THIS...
...

I wonder if
Hanami has a love for people.
ONCE YOU TAKE THEM, SHOW THEM TO ME AGAIN.
Compared to me, who cannot draw people's faces.
she is completely different
SIGN: TACHIBANA FLOWER SHOP
Why is it...
生花店

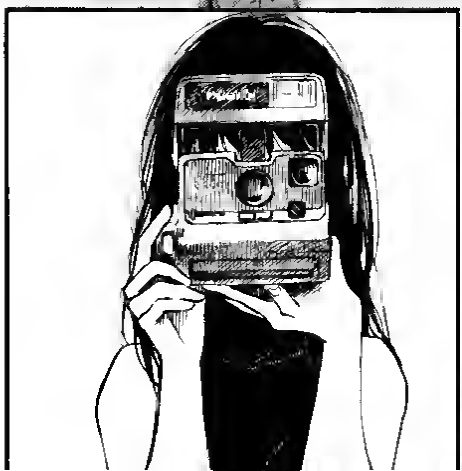
I still...
...that even though I try to draw flowers in her place...
yearn to draw her so much?

QUESTION!
夏の前日


FOR WHAT REASON DID YOU BREAK UP WITH YOUR PREVIOUS GIRLFRIEND?

HM?

WHAT KIND OF PERSON WAS SHE?
DIDN'T I ALREADY TELL YOU? I GOT DUMPED...



ARE YOU SURE...
...YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?
...

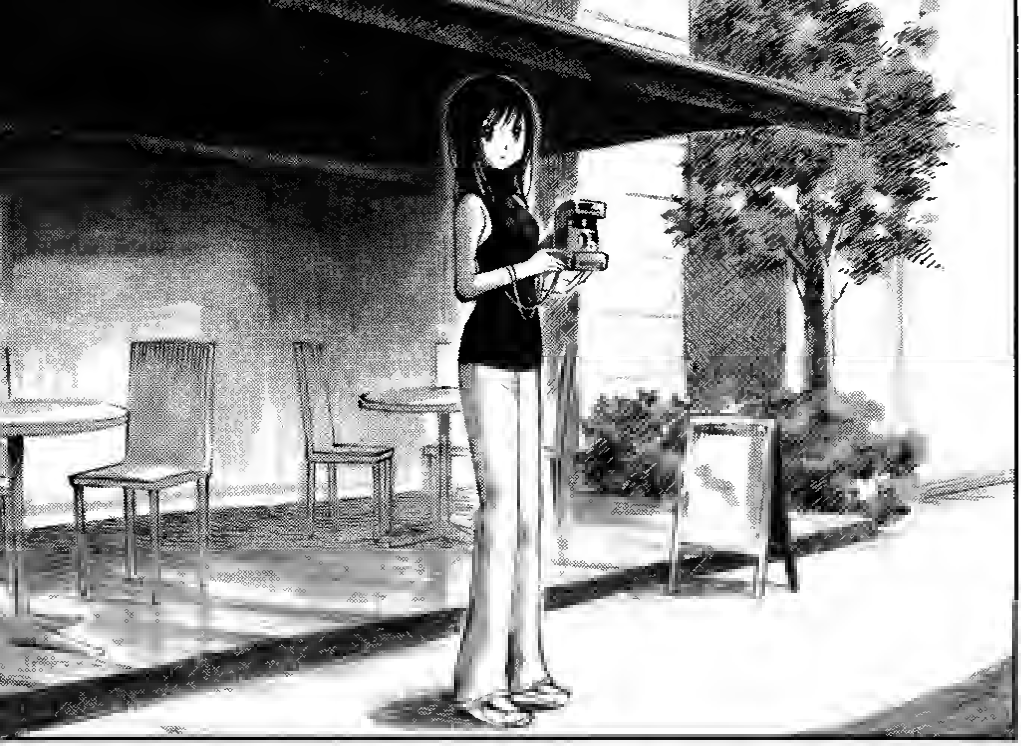
TO BE HONEST, I LOVE ALL GIRLS.
IF YOU'VE GOT AN DOUBTS ABOUT THAT, WHY NOT COME AND JOIN US FOR DRINKING TONIGHT?
I'M NOT SLICK ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO JUST GO AND CHEAT ON YOU, SEE.
JUST LIKE HOW YOU LOVE TETSUO -KUN, HUH.
YEAH.
...
AH,
AND SOMETIMES GUYS, TOO. DEPENDS.

...CAN I GO?
SURE, LET'S GO, LET'S GO!
IT ISN'T THAT I'VE GOT DOUBTS OR ANY-THING...
WANNA JUST KILL SOME TIME IN THE CLUB ROOM UNTIL IT'S TIME, THEN?
AH, IN THAT CASE...
I WANTED TO TRY TAKING MORE PHOTOS WITH THIS CAMERA.

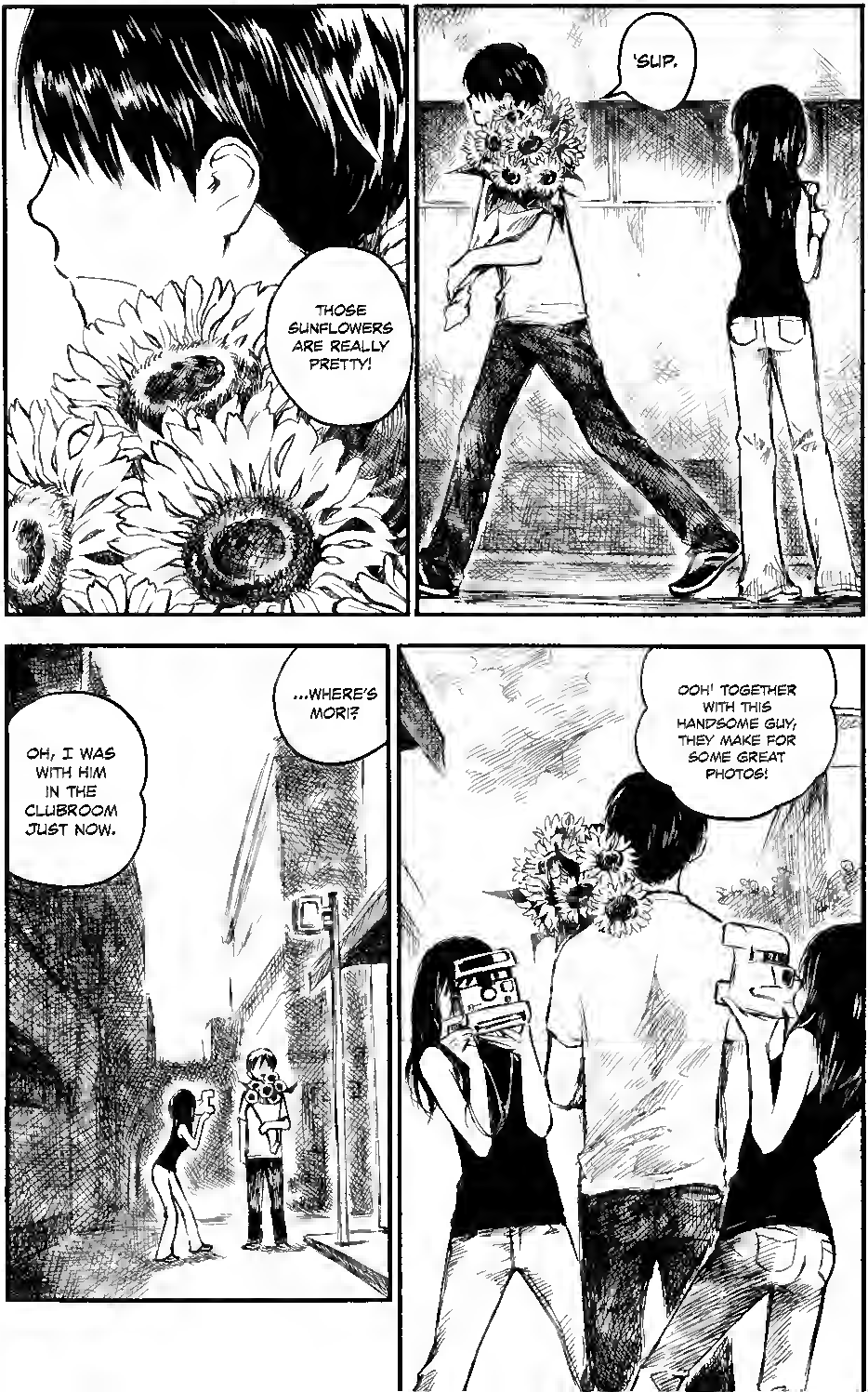
We need hands. Specifically, yours. So let's talk.
Go to *bit.ly/maigochat* for an interview.

[CHAPTER 22]

Hanami Hanami



WE MEET A LOT, DON'T WE?

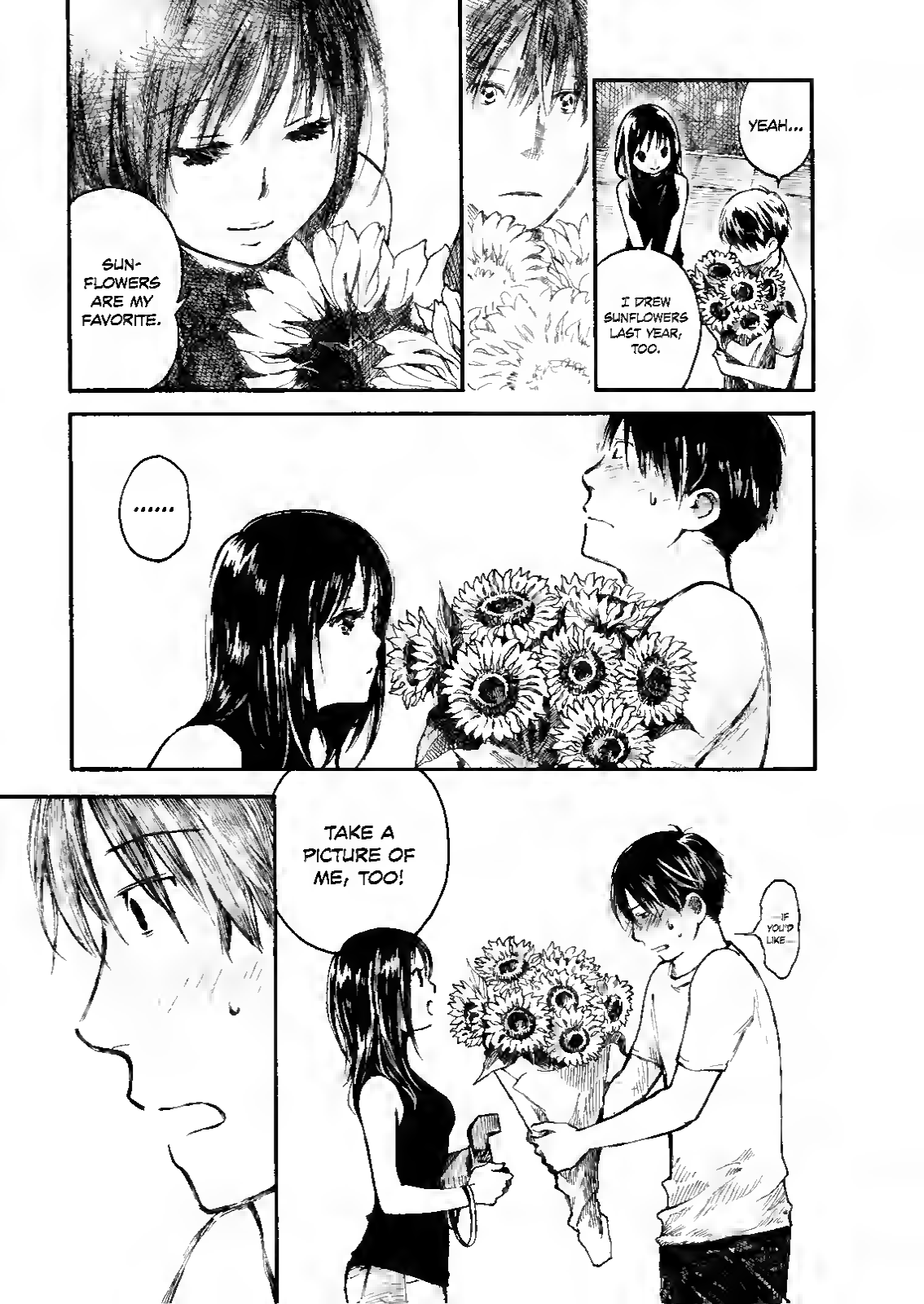

THOSE SUNFLOWERS ARE REALLY PRETTY!
'SUP.
...WHERE'S MORI?
OH, I WAS WITH HIM IN THE CLUBROOM JUST NOW.
OOH! TOGETHER WITH THIS HANDSOME GUY, THEY MAKE FOR SOME GREAT PHOTOS!

CLICK
WHIRR

TETSUO -KUN, YOU...
...ARE YOU DONE?
...DON'T WANT TO SHOW ME YOUR REAL EXPRESSIONS. =UH!

LIKE HIM?
HUH?
...THAT'S KIND OF LIKE MORI, TOO.
HEHE, I GUESS YOU'RE DIFFERENT, THEN...
PLEASE DON'T COMPARE ME WITH THAT OLD FART.
...ESPECIALLY FROM HOW HE TRIES TO ALWAYS HIDE WHEN HE LAUGHS...

BUT, YOU CAN BE SURE THAT HE'LL ALWAYS BE HONEST.
WELL, HE CAN BE LIKE THAT SOMETIMES.
Now that I think of it.
We've stopped using formal speech altogether
She even called me "Tetsuo-kun".
...
YEAH...
THE SUN-FLOWERS...
ARE YOU DRAWING THEM?


SUN-FLOWERS ARE MY FAVORITE.
YEAH...
I DREW SUNFLOWERS LAST YEAR, TOO.
.....
TAKE A PICTURE OF ME, TOO!
—IF YOU'D LIKE—

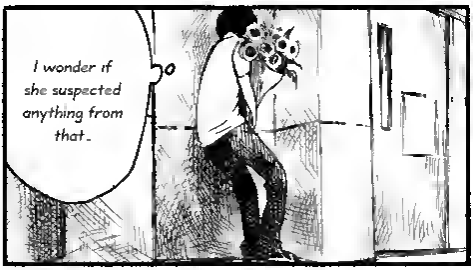
Y-YEAH.
JUST CLICK THE SHUTTER BUTTON!

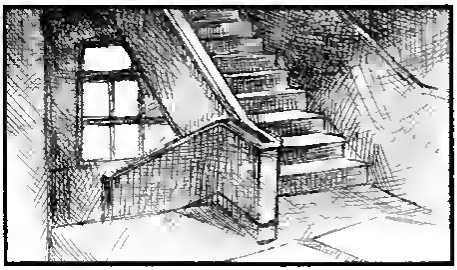
AREN'T YOU EVEN GOING TO GIVE ME A "SAY CHEESE" OR SOMETHING?
WHA"T
OH, RIGHT...
FLASH
I'LL
THUMP
GIVE THESE TO YOU.
UM
Y'SEE? MY EXPRESSION LOOKS ALL WEIRD...

—UH, FOR REFERENCE. I WAS JUST LOOKING FOR A REFERENCE PHOTO...
FOR RE—
SINCE I'M PAINTING SUNFLOWERS RIGHT NOW!
SO THIS WOULD-!!
...THIS WOULD BE REALLY HELPFUL AS REFERENCE
SO SINCE YOU LIKE SUNFLOWERS YOU CAN HAVE 'EM...
BUT, IN EX-CHANGE
I WANT THIS PHOTO.
WHAZ?!

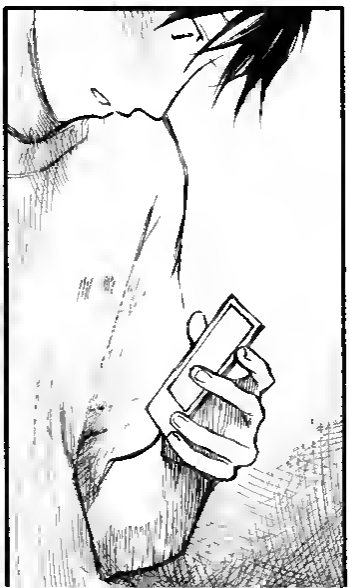
THANKS.
...SEE YA.
UM, THANK YOU.

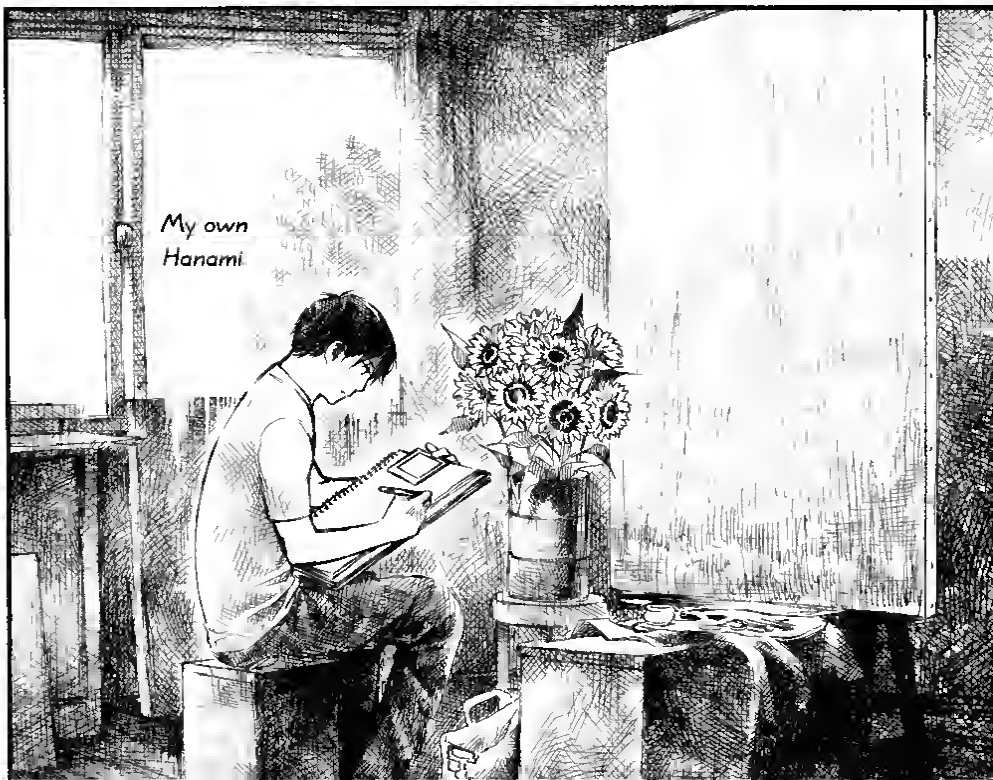
Hanami
Hanami


I wonder if she suspected anything from that.



I'm just going to look...

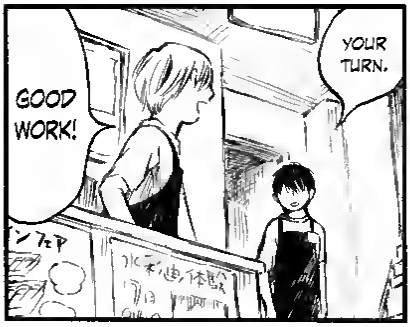


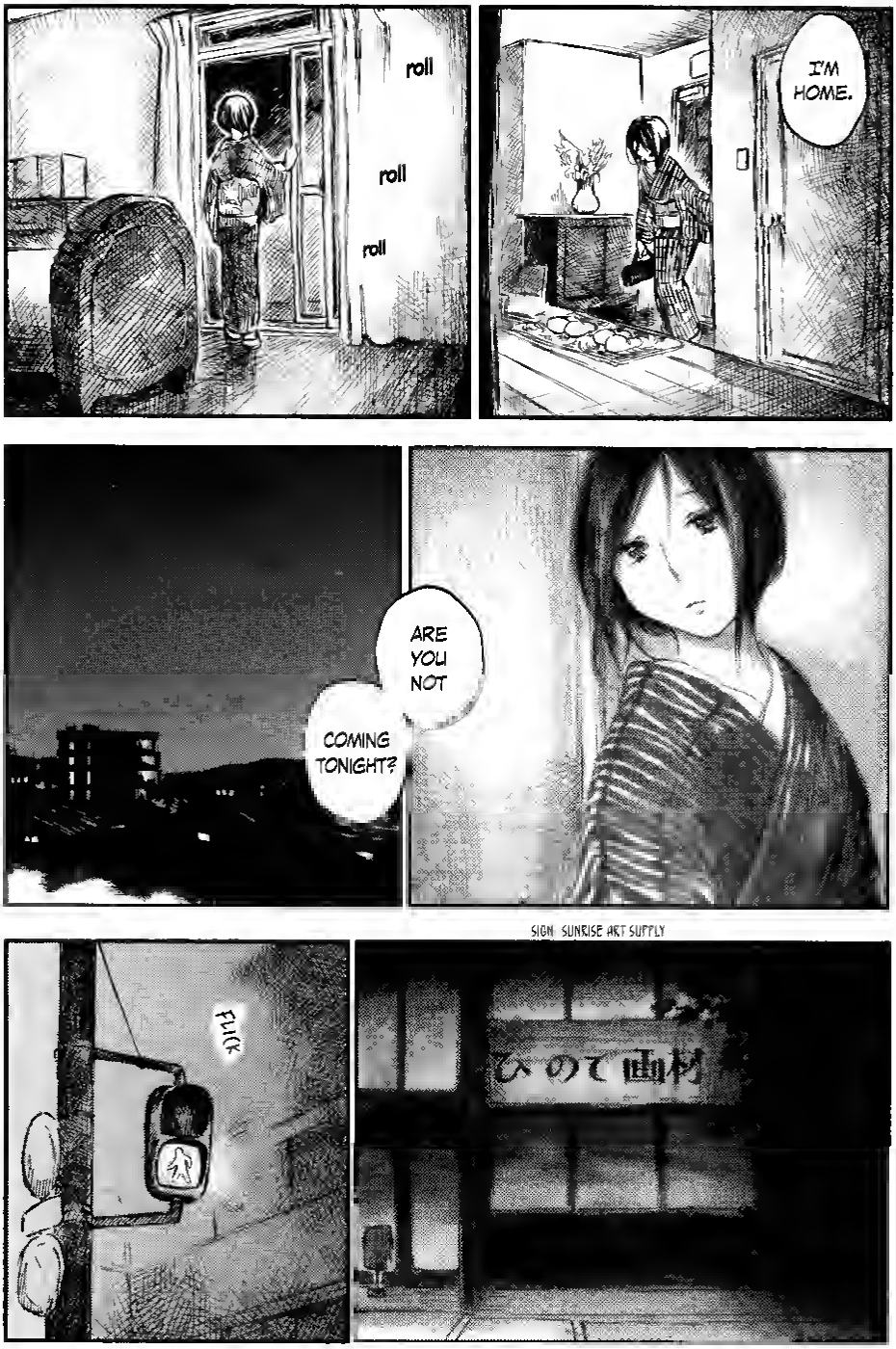

My own
Hanami

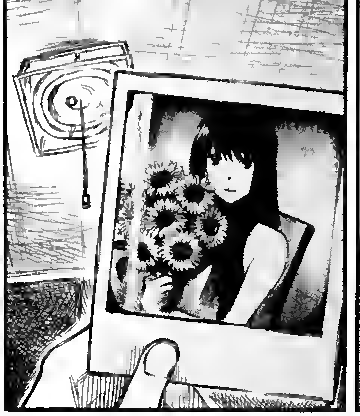
[CHAPTER 23]

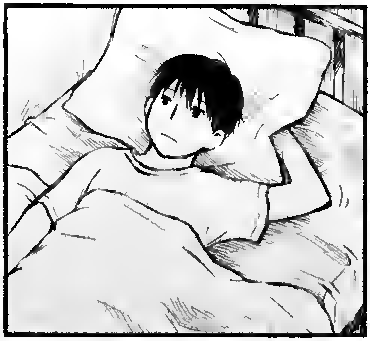
Investigating Lovers

SIGN: SUNRISE ART SUPPLY

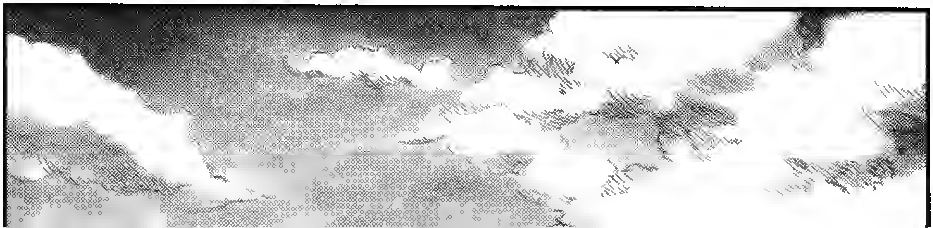


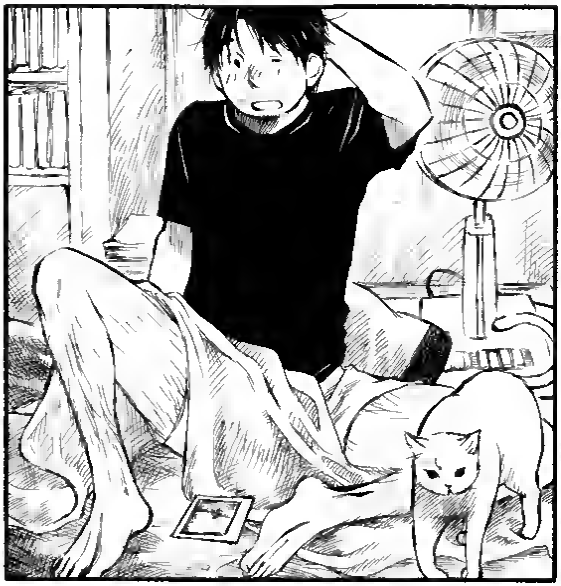

roll
roll
roll
I'M HOME.
ARE YOU NOT COMING TONIGHT?
SIGN: SUNRISE ART SUPPLY
FLICK



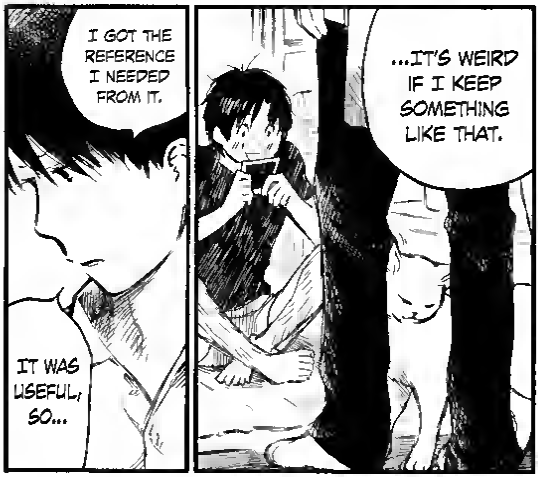


I never knew
that I was such an unloyal person



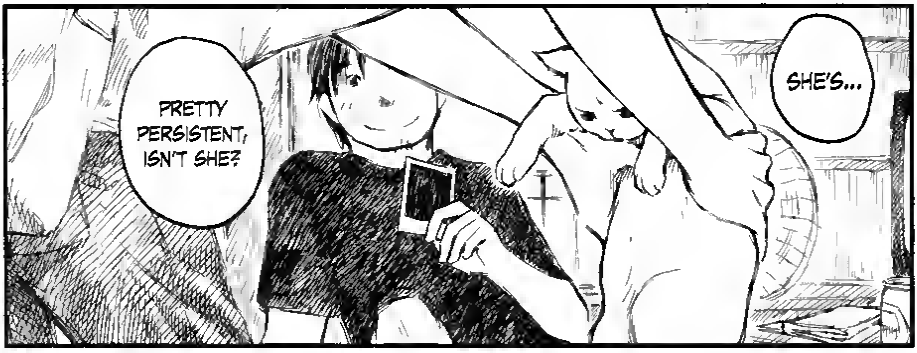


SIGN: AKATSUKI MANOR

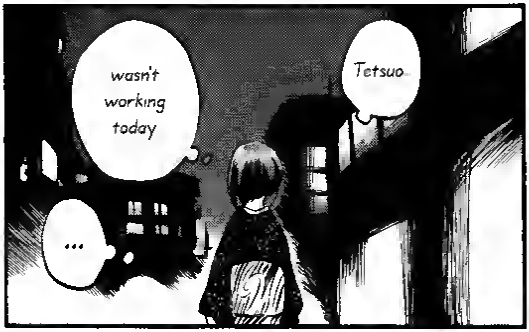


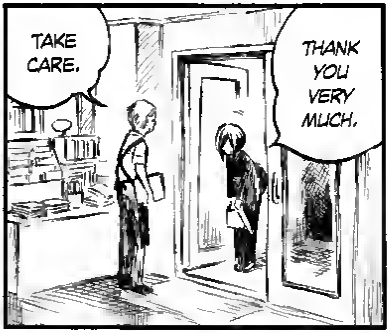
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WEIRD, OKAY?!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "WEIRD"?
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING AT ALL!
WHAT EXACTLY WERE YOU USING IT FOR?
BY "USEFUL",

PRESENTING FLOWERS TO OTHER PEOPLE'S LOVERS.
WHAT A LEWD MAN YOU ARE.
I'M HAPPY.
OW, STOP!
SCRATCH
RIP
SCRATCH
RIP
IT'S THE FIRST TIME THAT I'VE SEEN YOU ACT FRIENDLY TOWARDS MY GIRLFRIEND.

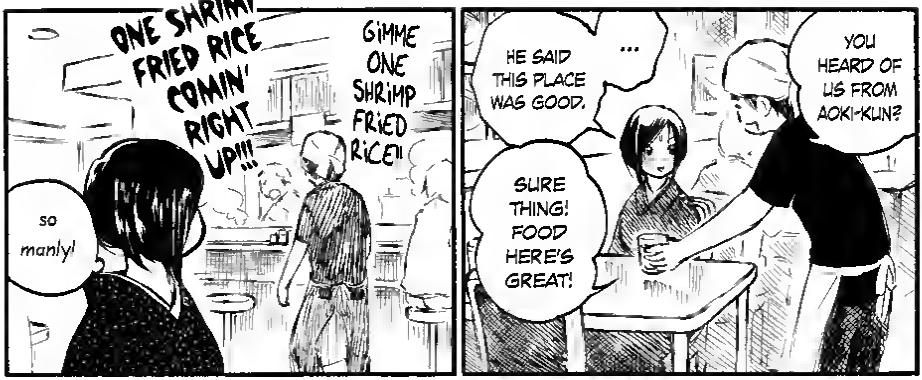


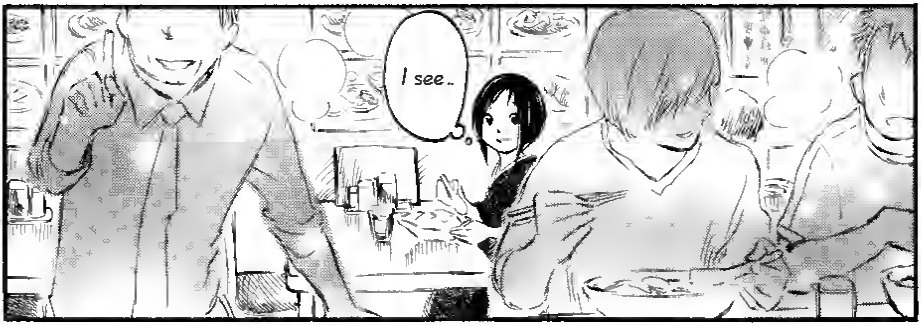
SIGN: SUNRISE ART SUPPLY





no!
I came here strictly for business Business!
THANKS FOR WAITING, HERE'S YOUR POTSTICKER SET!!
中華料理
龍龍
SIGN: CHINESE RESTAURANT DOUBLE DRAGON
OH!!
WELCOME
WELCOME!
WHAT A COINCI-DENCE.
...


ONE SHRIMP FRIED RICE COMIN' RIGHT UP!!!
GIMME ONE SHRIMP FRIED RICE!!
so manly!
YOU HEARD OF US FROM AOKI-KUN?
...
HE SAID THIS PLACE WAS GOOD.
SURE THING! FOOD HERE'S GREAT!

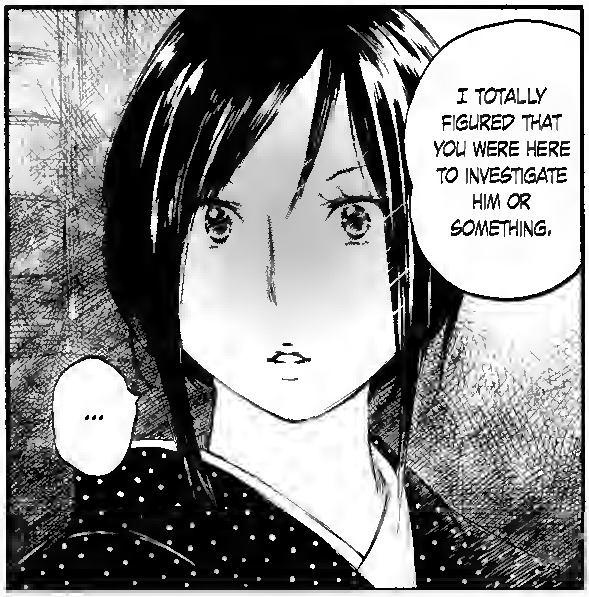

I see..

AOKI-KUN STARTED WORKING HERE WITH ME WHEN HE WAS STILL A RONIN, UNTIL HALFWAY THROUGH HIS FIRST YEAR AT SCHOOL.
IT'S AROUND THEN THAT HE STARTED WORKING AT SUNRISE ART SUPPLY AND QUIT WORKING HERE.
WELL, HE STILL HELPS OUT NOW AND THEN.

たばこ
SO THAT'S HOW IT IS...
Fuuu~

WHY'S THAT?

AKIRA-SAN, DID YOU HAVE A FIGHT WITH AOKI-KUN OR SOMETHING?

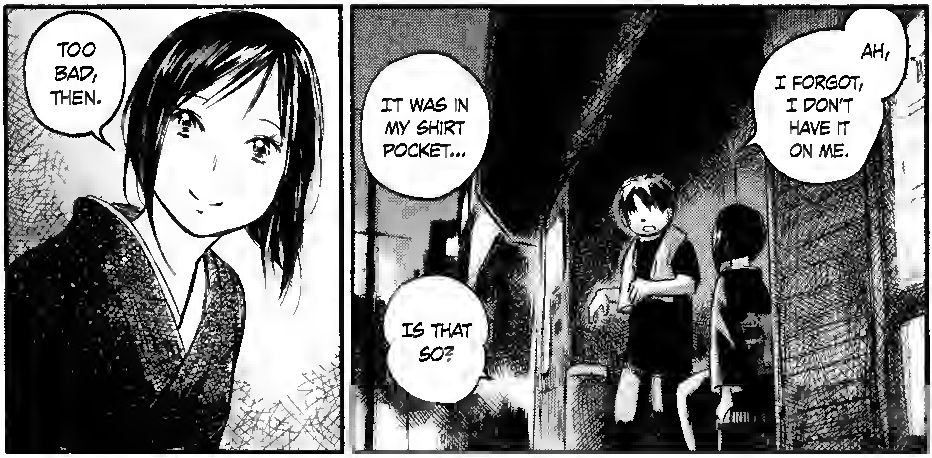

I TOTALLY FIGURED THAT YOU WERE HERE TO INVESTIGATE HIM OR SOMETHING.
...

EH? BAD GUESS?

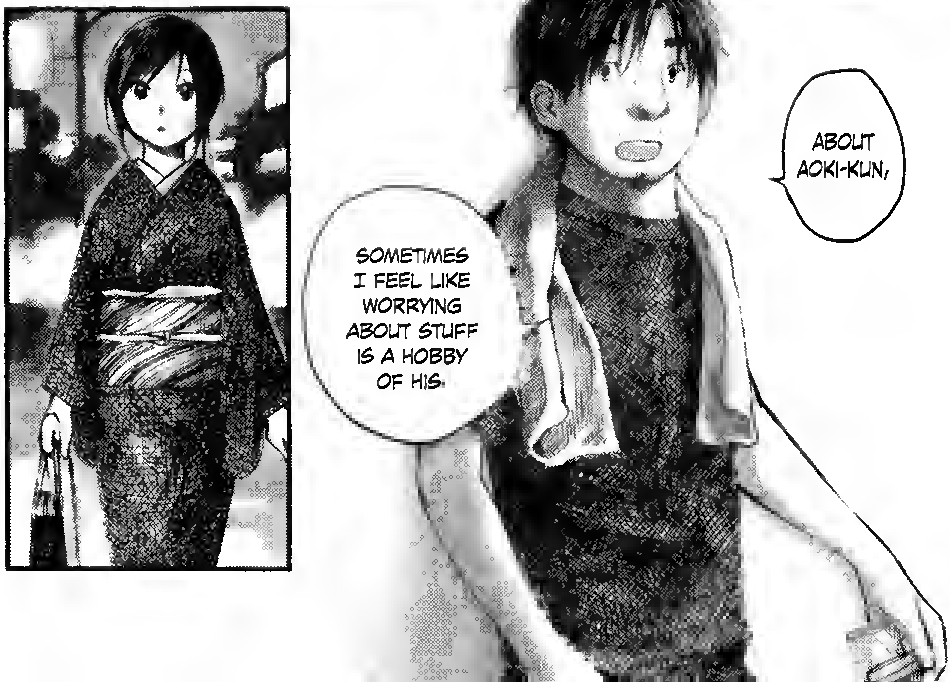
HE'S JUST GOT SOME DAYS WHERE HE'LL BE KINDA "OFF".
I-INVES-TIGATE.
I GOT TOGETHER WITH THIS GIRL, RIGHT?
SO, WHEN I THOUGHT I'D INTRODUCE HER TO HIM...
...
EVEN THOUGH HE'S A TOTAL PERVERT!!
HE WAS SO SHOCKED AT HER BEAUTY, BUT REALIZED I WAS THERE TOO, SO HE STAYED SILENT TRYING TO LOOK ALL COOL.
MAYBE IT'S JUST MY IMAGINATION, BUT...
...

NAH,
YOU KNOW THAT TALKING ABOUT HIM CHEERS ME UP?
ARE YOU...
ONLY TALKING ABOUT TETSUO BECAUSE
IT'S CAUSE I LIKE THAT GUY TOO.
MORI-KUN, WHAT'S YOUR GIRLFRIEND LIKE?
IT'S KIND OF EMBARRASSING.

SHE SOUNDS BUBBLY.
SHE'S VERY CUTE.
YEAH. SHE'S A DESIGN STUDENT.
TONS!!
YOU LOVE HER A LOT, DON'T YOU?
OH YEAH, WANNA SEE A PICTURE?

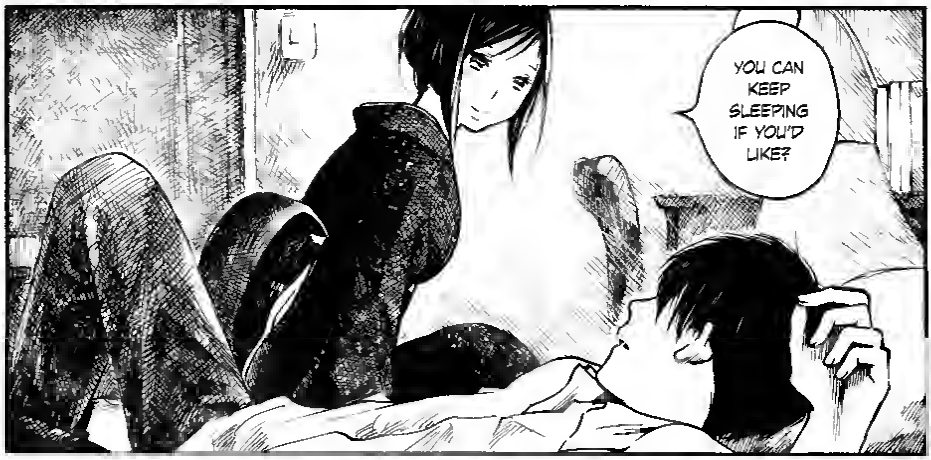


SIGN CHINESE RESTAURANT
POUBLE DRAGON

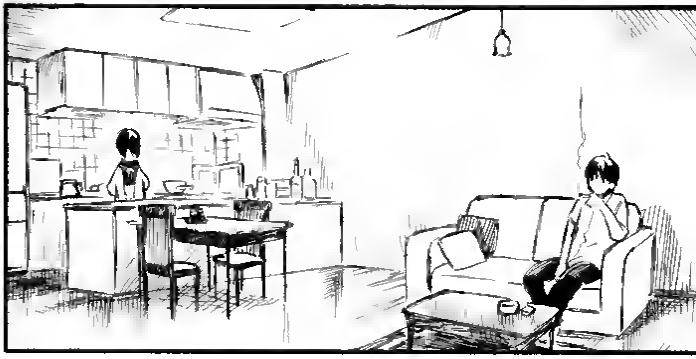


HA HA
WELL, BE CAREFUL!
...SO MEAN!
WELL, I'M A MEAN GUY.
...SO WHEN HE GETS ALL WORRIED ABOUT STUFF,
I JUST THINK "AH, HE'S ALL CAUGHT UP IN HIS HOBBY AGAIN..."
THAT'S...
I guess he means I shouldn't worry too much?
He's right I mean, Tetsuo looks fine now
He even cooked for me! And he's been really nice...
I need to calm down

...
WELCOME BACK.


YOU CAN KEEP SLEEPING IF YOU'D LIKE?

...



I MET MORI-KUN TODAY.
...
I wonder if he's enjoying his hobby right now?!
FuFu~
HUNH.
AH. WAS IT GOOD?
I HAD THE SHRIMP FRIED RICE.
VERY GOOD!!
I WENT TO THE CHINESE RESTAURANT THAT YOU USED TO WORK AT.
HE'S CUTE!
?!
ISN'T HE REALLY POPULAR?
I'M TALKING ABOUT HOW HE LOOKS!
AREN'T YOU THE SAME AGE?
WHAT?! THAT OLD GUY?!
MORI-KUN IS REALLY CUTE, ISN'T HE?

...
I GUESS.

BUT, YOU ARE THE CUTEST ONE.

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME HAPPY!

The days
have gotten longer...
夏の前日

...

I'M COMING IN...

THAT REMINDS ME, SHE MENTIONED THAT SHE'D BE BUSIER THIS MONTH.
SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF WORK.

AKIRA'S
GONNA BE LATE TODAY, I GUESS.

[CHAPTER 24]

Where are we Going?

It's the tropics!
It's the tropics!

...
日吉ヶ丘藝術大学

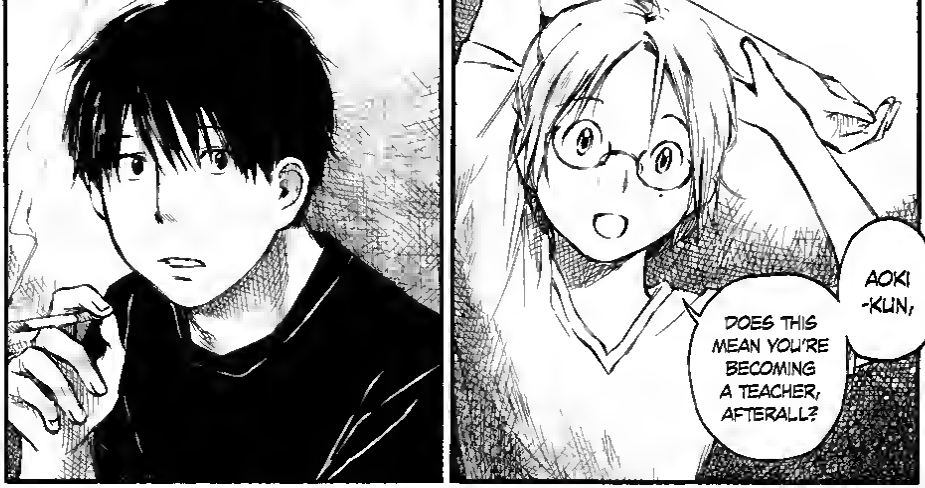
ANYTHING'S FINE, AS LONG AS IT'S BLACK.
AH, YES.
IS IT OKAY TO USE THIS PEN FOR INKING?
Looks like Aoki-kun learned about inking

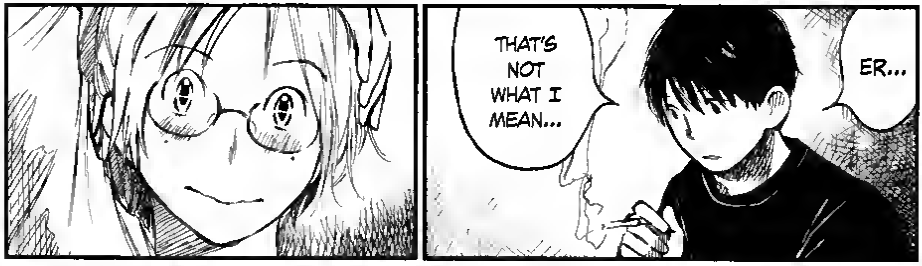
...

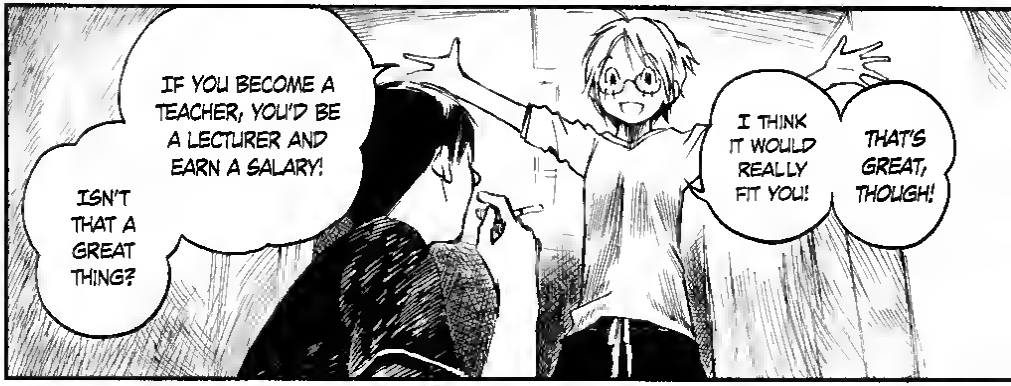
WHIRR
fuu...
WHIRRR

AH!
...
One of the neighbors must've had curry
Sniff Sniff
Smells nice~
Ding!
THAT LOOKS GOOD.
Save some for me.
DOES HE REALLY THINK I CAN EAT ALL THIS BY MYSELF?

THANKS.
skritch
skritch
skritch
NAH...
YOU REALLY WANTED TO PREPARE FOR YOUR OWN PROJECT, RIGHT?
AOKI -KUN, DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE SKETCHING TRIP?
IIJIMA -SENSEI IS TAKING ONE.
THINK YOU CAN GO?
YOU'RE GONNA TREAT ME TO SOME-THING, RIGHT?
DON'T FORGET.
AH, THAT. I'VE GOT SUMMER CLASSES TO TEACH AT THE ART SCHOOL, SO...


AOKI -KUN,
DOES THIS MEAN YOU'RE BECOMING A TEACHER, AFTERALL?


ER...
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN...

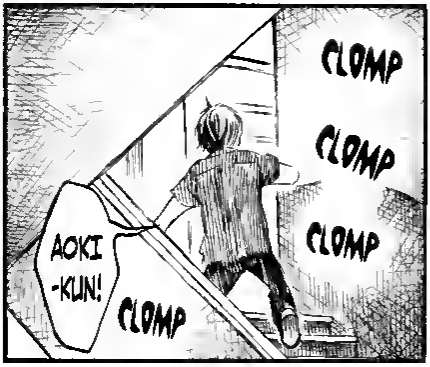

THAT'S GREAT, THOUGH!
I THINK IT WOULD REALLY FIT YOU!
IF YOU BECOME A TEACHER, YOU'D BE A LECTURER AND EARN A SALARY!
ISN'T THAT A GREAT THING?

THERE'S NO WAY THAT'D FIT ME SO WELL.
BUT THEN ONE DAY YOU WOULD SUDDENLY VANISH!

WHO SAID THAT... WAS IT GAUGUIN?
C'MON, IT'LL BE AWESOME! JUST LIKE THE WORLD FROM "MOON AND A SIXPENCE."
NO THANKS.
I'd forgotten.
Not on purpose, of course.
There was just too much going on to notice what had been right in front of me.
YOU WOULD THROW AWAY EVERYTHING TO BECOME A PAINTER!!
WHERE HAVE WE COME FROM?
WHO ARE WE?
AND HOW FAR CAN WE GO?!

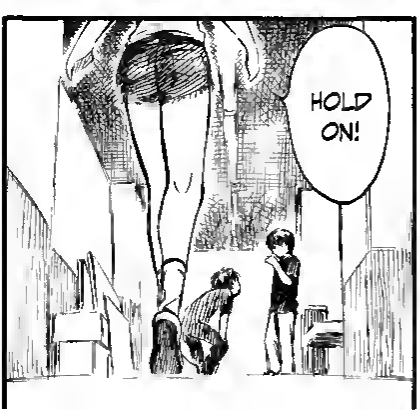
No matter how much I wander and search
this is always where I end up again
Drawing is all I've got.

Where will we go from here on out?
AOKI -KUN~
TODAY'S PRETTY SUNNY, TOO.
AOKI -KUUN~


CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP
AOKI -KUN!

WESTERN ART RESEARCH

CAN YOU COVER MY SHIFT TODAY?!
NO.
MY, AREN'T YOU BEING ALL ENTHUSIASTIC!! COMING OUT HERE ON A SUNDAY!


HOLD ON!

NOT EVEN IF YOU MAKE THAT FACE AT ME.
haah
hahh
haaa
haahh
haa—

HEY THERE!
HOW IS THIS MY FAULT?
WE CAN'T GO AND WATCH A MOVIE SINCE YOU WON'T COVER MY SHIFT!
HE SAID "NO."
OF COURSE HE DID. GO TO WORK.
WHICH MOVIE?
THEY'RE ONLY SCREENING IT TODAY...
...
Augh why did I react so much when she said "sunflower?"
"SUN-FLOWER!"
BADUMP

I KNOW, BUT
I CAN'T GO TO THE THEATER BY MYSELF!
WELL, IF MORI CAN'T GO, I GUESS WE CAN'T HELP IT...
SORRY.
IF YOU WANNA SEE IT SO BADLY, WHY NOT JUST GO AND SEE IT?
CAN TETSUO-KUN COME WITH ME?
"SURE!"
...IS WHAT YOU WANTED ME TO SAY, RIGHT?
WHAZ?!
You can't go by yourself?!
CRUSHED
YOU'RE FINE TOO, SO JUST PLEASE COME WATCH IT WITH ME!
BUT I'LL BE LONELY!
AND IT'S DARK!
AND IT'S SUPER EMPTY IF YOU'RE ALONE!!

BLUSH
...CAN BE PRETTY SELFISH SOMETIMES, HUH?
YOU...
MAN, DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THAT'S WHEN SHE'S THE CUTEST?
YEAH, WHATEVER.
AH, ER—
...
...
YOU WERE BUSY TODAY...
RIGHT?
...
NO—
UM
I'M SORRY
UHH...

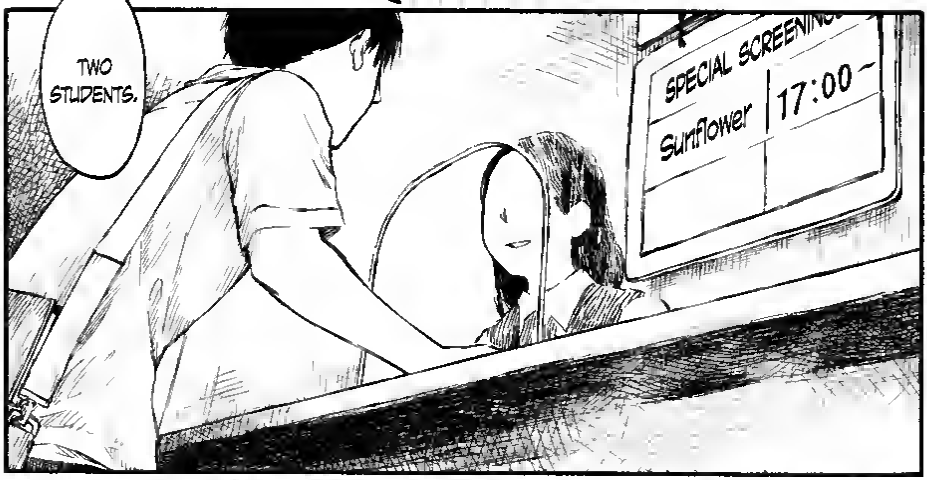
Y-
YEAH...
I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU! TAKING MY GIRL TO SEE A MOVIE TOGETHER!!
...
WHICH IS IT?!
BUT! SINCE IT'S AOKI -KUN, I'LL FORGIVE YOU.

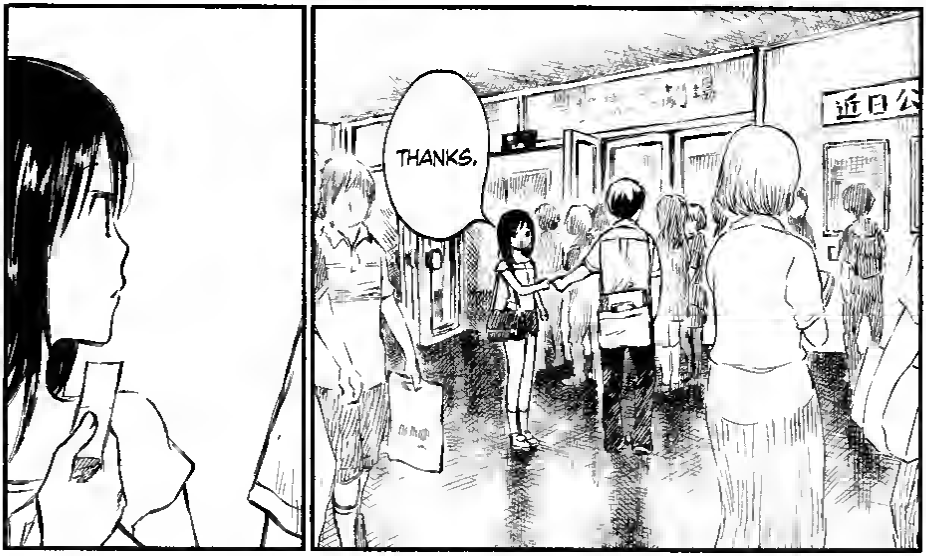
Alone with Hanami
Just the two of us
...WITH HANAMI?
IS, IS THIS OKAY?!
OBVIOUSLY, I WON'T DO ANYTHING!
What do I do?!
What do I do?!
SLAM
HYOSHIGAOKA STATION

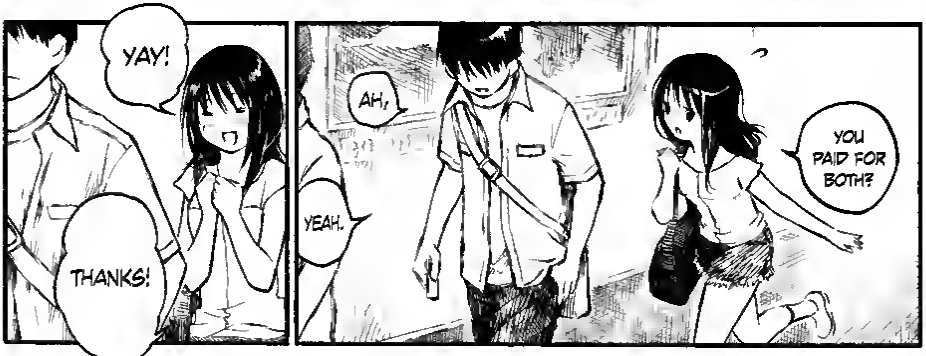
SORRY FOR THE WAIT.
STIFF
IT'S OKAY, I JUST GOT HERE. I HAVE MY READING WITH ME, ANYWAY.
DID YOU CHANGE?
UH
IT'S JUST 'CAUSE
I HADN'T BEEN HOME SINCE YESTERDAY.
AND I WAS SWEATY,
SO UH, YEAH.
...LET'S GO.
YEAH.

We need hands. Specifically, yours. So let's talk.
Go to *bit.ly/maigochat* for an interview.

夏の前日

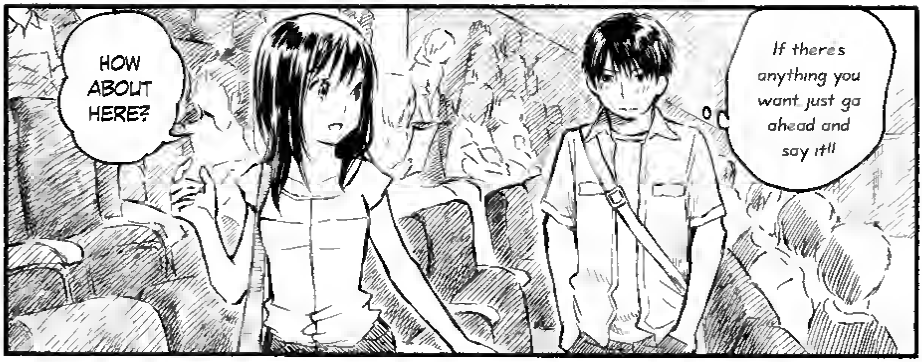

TWO STUDENTS.
SPECIAL SCREENING
Sunflower
17:00~

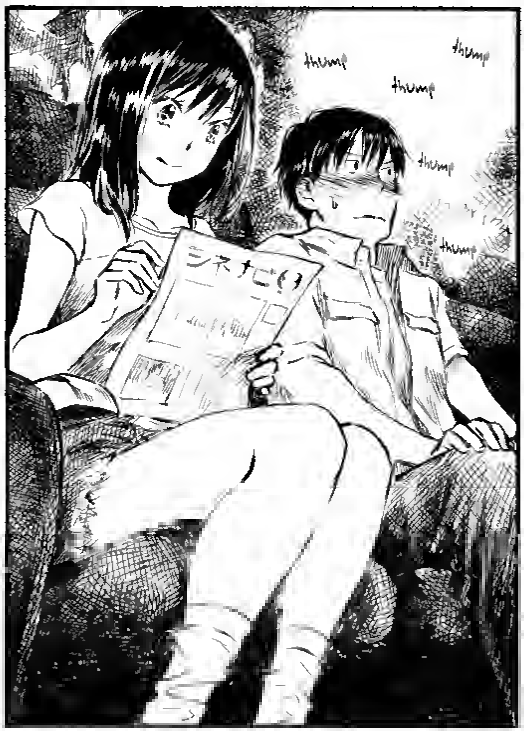

THANKS.


YAY!
THANKS!
AH,
YEAH.
YOU PAID FOR BOTH?

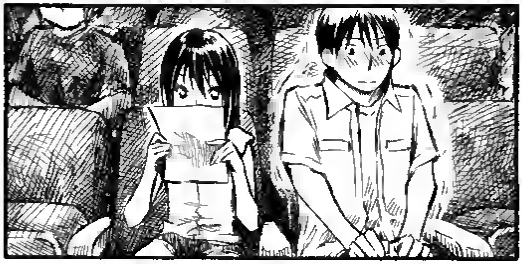
CHAPTER: 25

Guilt is nothing

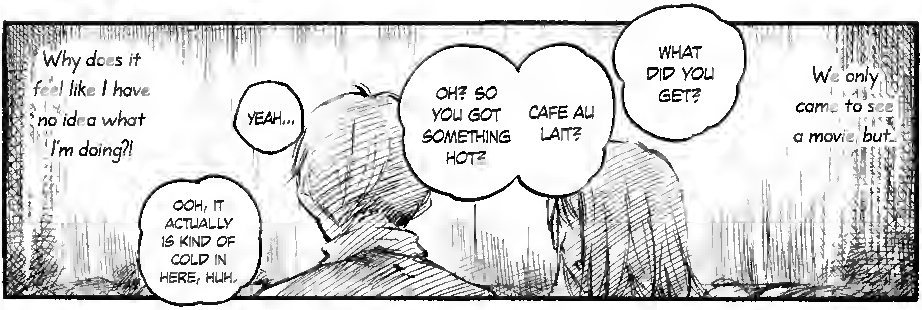

HOW ABOUT HERE?
If there's anything you want just go ahead and say it!!

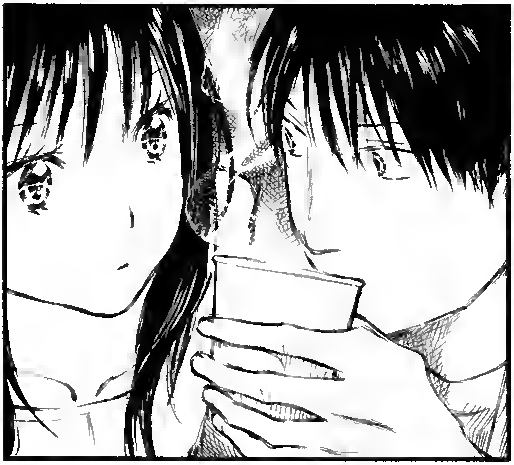

thump
thump
thump
thump
thump

THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE, HUH?

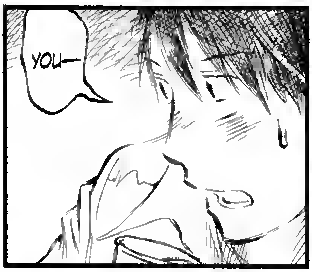


Cool face
SHOULD I GO AND GET SOME DRINKS?
AH, I'M FINE.
WELCOME BACK~
Why is this so hard?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
He didn't really want to drink anything.
...


Why does it feel like I have no idea what I'm doing?!
YEAH...
OOH, IT ACTUALLY IS KIND OF COLD IN HERE, HUH.
OH? SO YOU GOT SOMETHING HOT?
CAFE AU LAIT?
WHAT DID YOU GET?
We only came to see a movie, but...



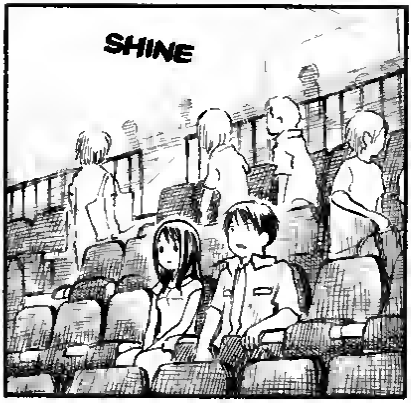
It's because I've never been out with someone else's girl so it's pretty uncomfortable.
No


YOU—

CAN I HAVE A SIP?

...THERE'S NO SUGAR IN IT...
I CAN'T?
YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T NEED ANYTHING!!
AH, THAT'S HOW I LIKE IT!

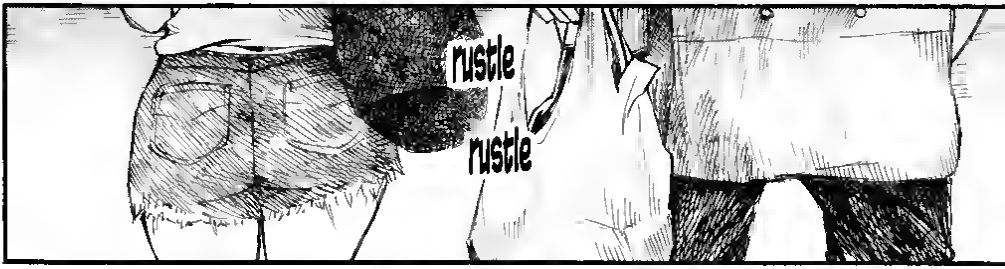
t—
touch—
tou—
—ched
I
Ah—
SFX: PEEEEEEP (THEATER)
...
Ah, she drank it
THE MOVIE WILL BEGIN SHORTLY.
TASTY!


SHINE

WHA?!
TWITCH

It's already over
all of it...
No way.
sigh~
Was it because I fell asleep?! Or because of the movie?!
What's that sigh for?!
WHAT AM I EVEN TALKING ABOUT?!
How the heck could I screw up the first time we go out together so badly?!
None of these make good excuses..!!
Wait but wouldn't it be uplifting if she starts hating me after this?
-Extreme nervousness
-Pulled an all-nighter
-Very hungry
-It's some dark euro film
SPEAKING OF THE MOVIE, THE ONLY THING I REMEMBER FROM IT IS THAT THEY WERE EATING OMLETTES!!
THAT MADE ME WANT TO EAT OMLETTES.
...
glance

OH.
SURE...
DO YOU KNOW ANY PLACES THAT SERVE GOOD OMLETTES?
YOU REALLY WANT THAT OMLETTE, HUH?
BUT DON'T YOU WANT ONE TOO?!
YEAH..
YEAH.
SO LET'S GO AND EAT DINNER, 'KAY?
AH.



SIGN: AKATSUKI MANOR

VRRRR
HEY, CAN I TURN THE FAN ALL THE WAY UP?
GO AHEAD.
rustle
HI THERE~ WERE YOU SLEEPING?
IT'S HOT.
WHY DON'T YOU PLAY WITH THE CAT?
JUST... SIT AND WAIT A WHILE, IT'S OKAY.
SO WHERE DO WE START?
WHY?! NO WAY!
LET'S COOK TOGE-THER!
Is she mad?
ER...

So cramped
...ALRIGHT THEN, CAN YOU HELP WASH THE VEGETABLES?
OKAY~
SIZZLE
STIR
STIR
STIR
STIR
CLUNK
SURE.
IS THIS OKAY FOR PLATES?

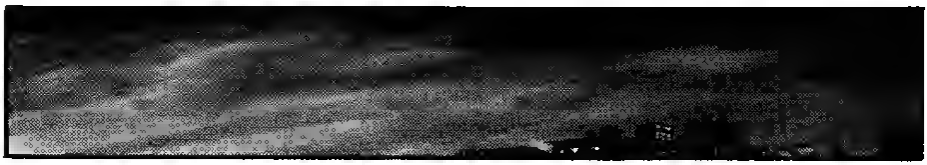
MMMM~~~
THE BREAD IS GOOD TOO!
CAN I EAT THE OMLETTE WITH CHEESE AND THE EGG?
GO AHEAD.
YEAH...
ISN'T THIS INCREDI-BLE?!?!
ISN'T IT SO GOOD?!
IT'S SO GOOD!!

AREN'T YOU TIRED?
...IS IT SHOWING ON MY FACE?
YEP.
YOU LIE.
I LIED.
...
WANT TO GET SOMETHING TO EAT?
WE MIGHT AS WELL CLOSE UP TODAY.
café galerie
AH... I'VE STILL GOT SOME WORK TO DO.
OOH, SO YOU WERE STILL BUSY AFTERALL.
MM.

HM? DID YOU MAKE TOO MUCH?
BESIDES, I'VE GOT A TON OF CURRY LEFTOVER FROM LAST NIGHT.
IT'S A GOOD THING WE DIDN'T USE ALL 24 EGGS, HUH?
...YOU KNEW, HUH?
WELL, YOU WERE NODDING OFF A LOT.
...
SO YOU DIDN'T SLEEP THROUGH THE WHOLE MOVIE, THEN!
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN CHUCK THEM OUT THE WINDOW.

WHA...
I'M SORRY.
I DRAGGED YOU ALONG EVEN THOUGH YOU WEREN'T INTERESTED.
YOU WERE TIRED, RIGHT?
AND THE THEATER WAS DARK...
NOT AT ALL.
IT WAS FU—
ER, IT WAS ...INTERESTING...
...YEAH.
WELL, "INTERESTING" MIGHT NOT BE THE RIGHT WORD FOR IT, BUT,
UM,
I THINK IT WAS WORTH THE TIME...
...
REALLY?
...

I TURN RED RIGHT AWAY IF I DRINK...
ME TOO.
...I'M DRUNK.
YEAH.
RED.



SIGN: CHINESE RESTAURANT: PURPLE DRAGON

PHEW~
ROLL~
I'M SO FULL...!
SORRY, I GOT TOO COMFOR-TABLE!

I WONDER IF MORI'LL HURRY UP AND GET BACK!
I MEAN, IT'S FINE...
HIS SHIFT'S OVER, RIGHT?
AH, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...

SINCE YOU DON'T TRY TO MAKE EXCUSES AND COVER UP HOW YOU REALLY FEEL.
Y'KNOW,
MORI WAS TALKING ABOUT HOW YOU'RE AN HONEST PERSON.
NO IDEA.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I'M NOT SURE I LIKE IT.
YOU BOTH SAY THE SAME THINGS.
YOU SAID EARLIER THAT MORI DOESN'T LIE, RIGHT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

She makes the happiest face, doesn't she?
When she talks about Mori,

IT WAS GOOD!
HOW WAS THE MOVIE?
TETSUO -KUN FELL ASLEEP, THOUGH.
RIGHT?

click
HEY, SOMETHING SMELLS REALLY GOOD!
AH, WELCOME BACK!!

I'M HEADING HOME.
SEE YA.
YOU FELL ASLEEP?!
THANKS ALOT FOR TODAY!
TETSUO -KUN!
SO...
I'VE GOT WORK EARLY TO-MORROW.
WHAAAT? STAY OVER!
LET'S DRINK ALL NIGHT!
LET'S GO AGAIN SOMETIME!

What am I doing..?

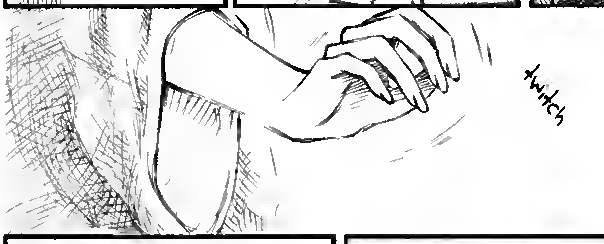
Akira hasn't come home yet, huh?

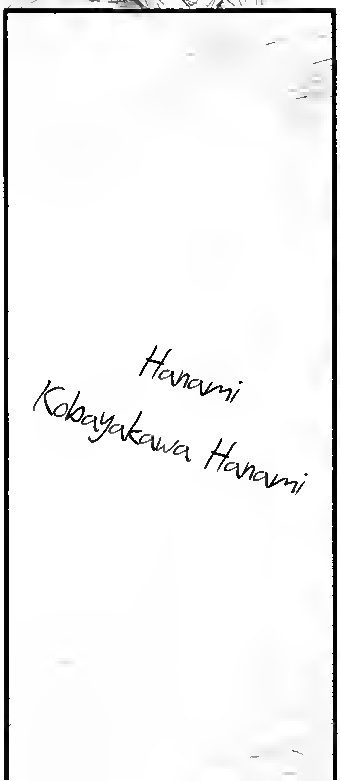
FUMP
...
Why am I so relieved that she isn't here?
I didn't even do anything wrong...

breath
I'M BACK...

I'M SORRY...

AH


twitch

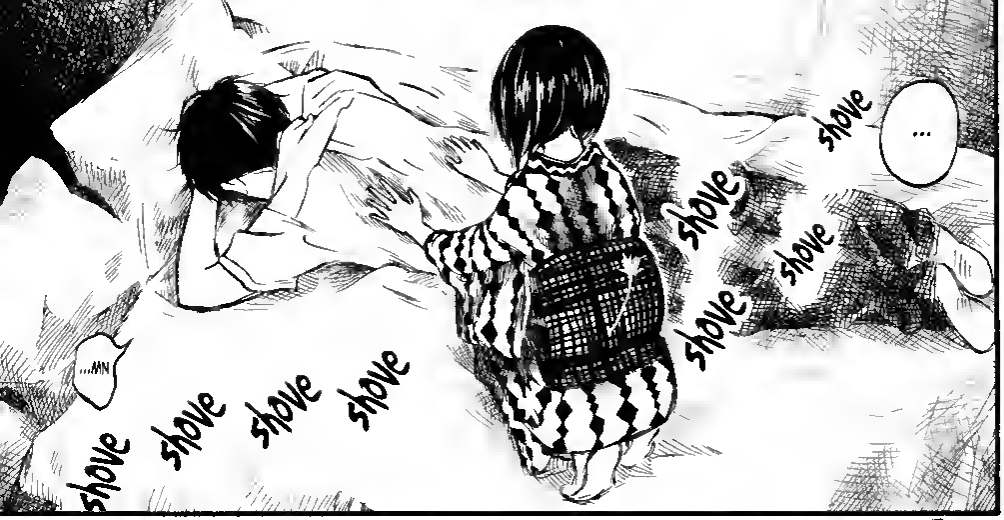

Hanami
Kobayakawa Hanami

Hanami
Kobayakawa Hanami

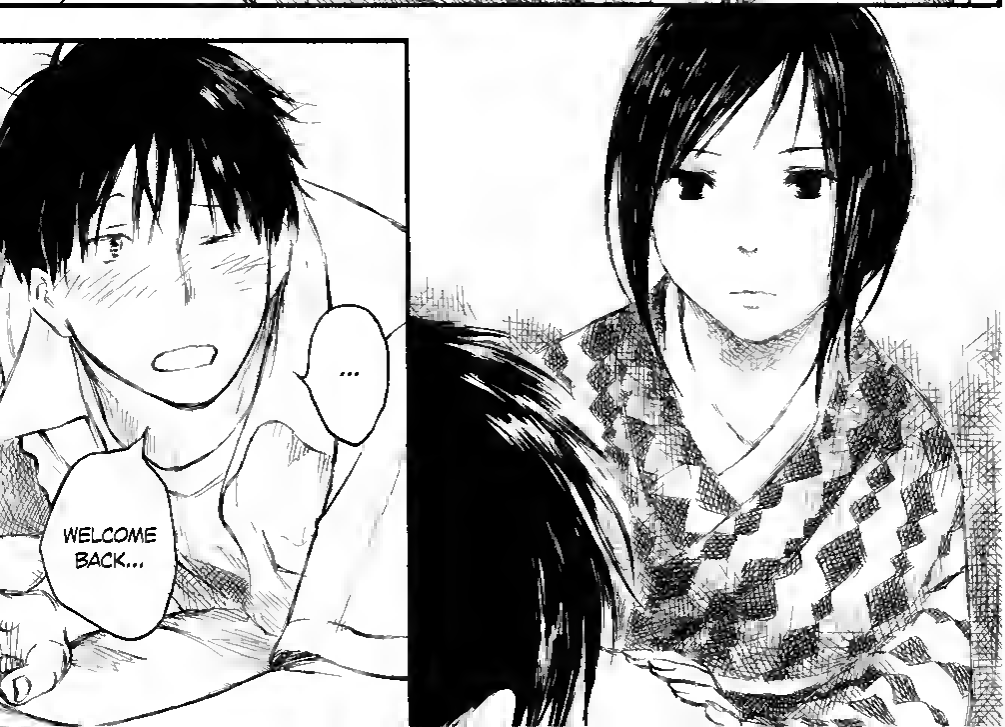
...
Hmmm
Kabuyabuun Hmmm

[CHAPTER 26] Bubbling
sniff
...
...

snore
snore


...
shove
shove
shove
shove
shove
shove
...mn
shove
shove
shove
shove

W...
shove
shove
shove
OKAY, OKAY
...
WHAT DO YOU WANT?


...
WELCOME BACK...

WHAT TIME IS IT?
HUH...?
...AH, I FELL ASLEEP
click
clack
UM...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SLIP
GURK
HOLD ON A SEC...
AHH!

YOU LIKE BEING RAPED, DON'T YOU?
YOU KNOW...
UH...

STOP!!
DON'T DO IT THERE!
squeak
WAIT
Flop
AUGH!
IDIOT!!
I DO NOT!!

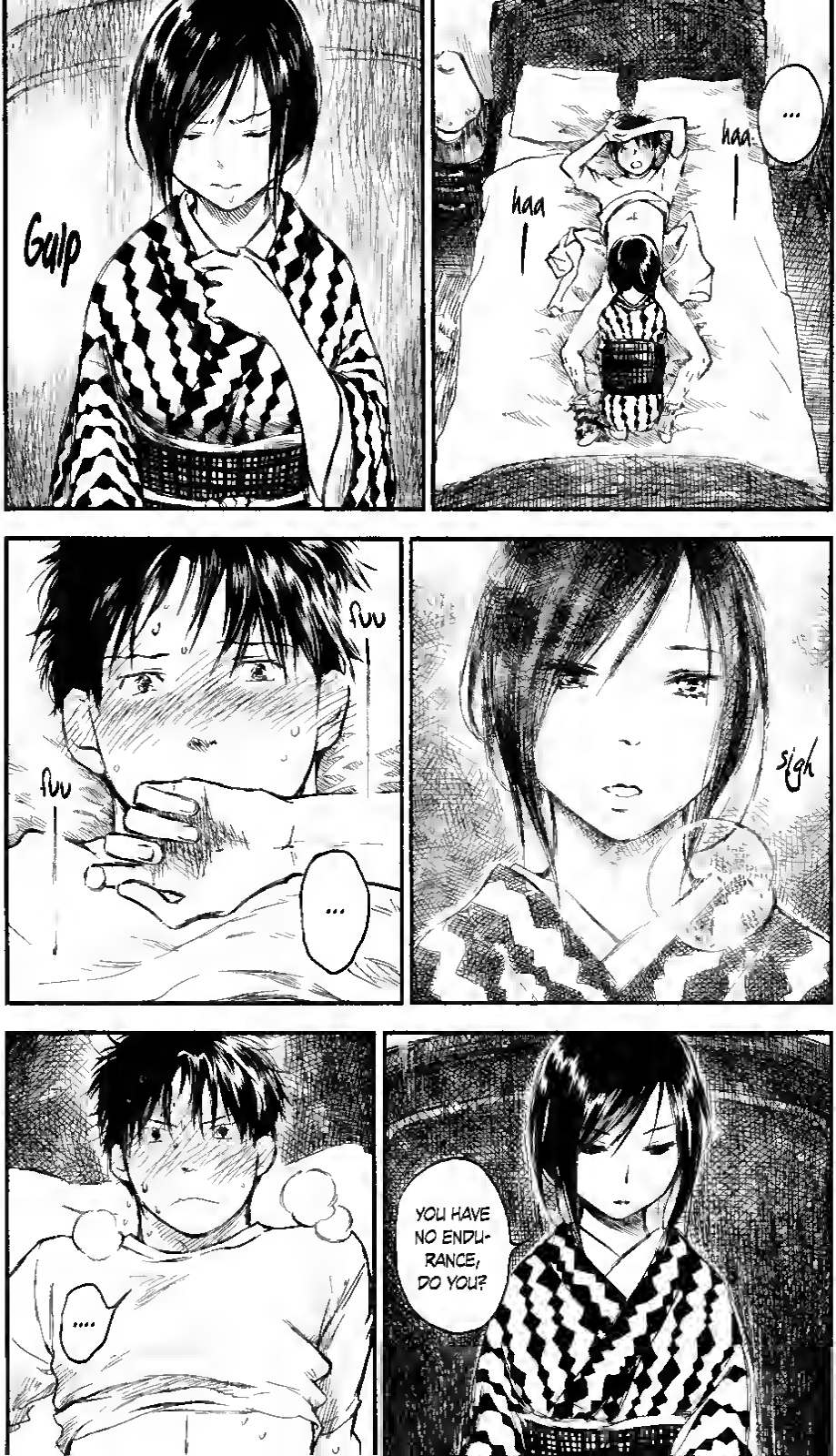
ha
ha
...
...
SEE?
YOU DO LIKE THIS.
...DON'T

IS THAT SO?
ha
hah
stroke
NN
stroke
NN
stroke
NN
stroke
NN
stroke
NNNGGH!
stroke
NNN...
stroke
stroke
stroke
slip
uu...

hah
hah
ha
ha
...
hah
YOU CAN'T DO IT YOURSELF.
...
DON'T.
...
LET ME COME.

YOU AREN'T ALLOWED TO COME UNTIL I SAY YOU CAN.
UU
AH
GOT IT?
...
nod
nod
Ahhh——
I CAN'T
I CAN'T
I CAN'T
I CAN'T
NO...

Ah...
Hahh
Ah!
Ah!
Ahh
Augh
AH...
HAA...
...

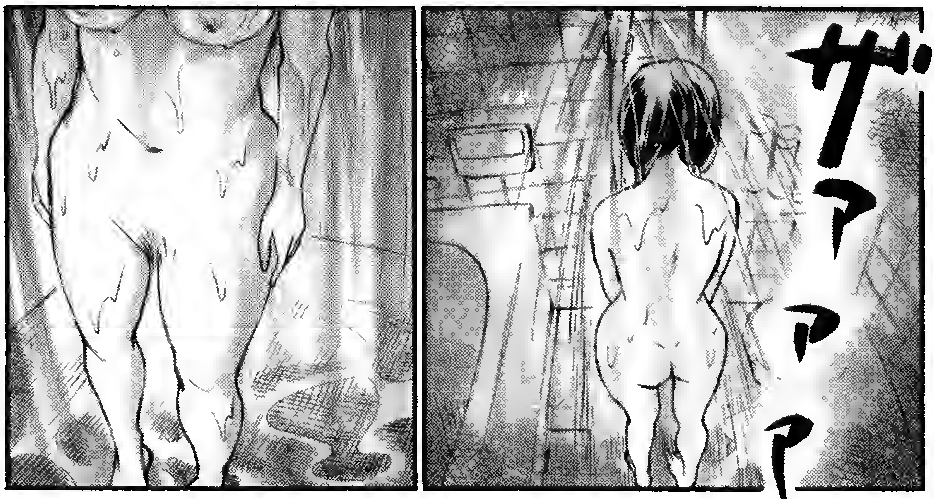

Gulp
haa
haa
...
fuu
fuu
...
sigh
....
YOU HAVE NO ENDU-RANCE, DO YOU?

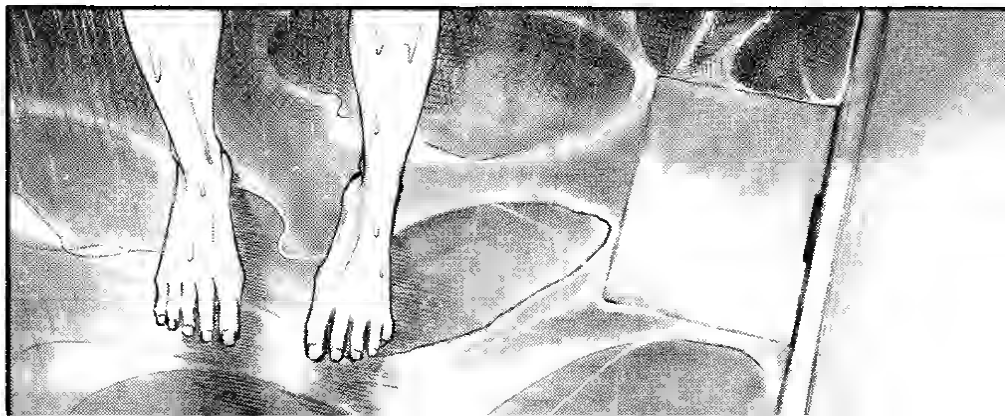
SORRY
pet
pet

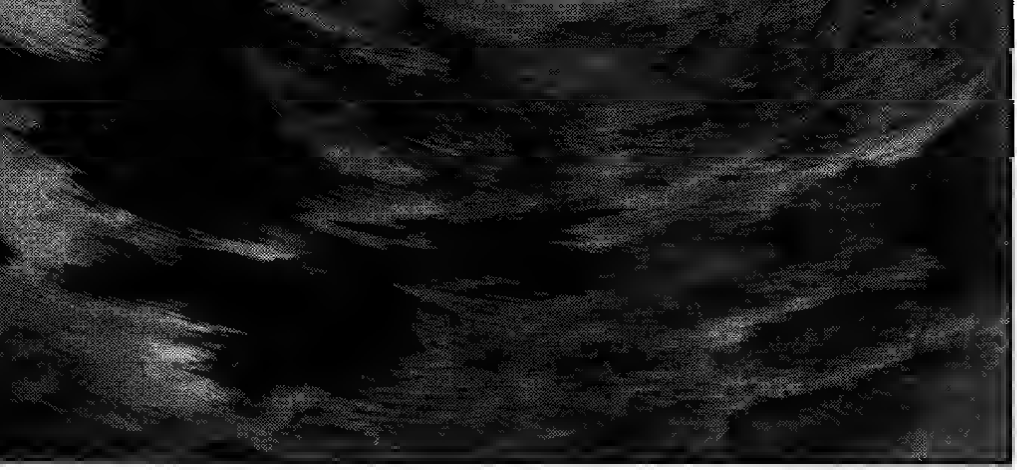
JEEZ, I'M GOING TO SLEEP...
SERIOUSLY! YOU'RE SUCH AN EROTIC WOMAN!
STOP THAT!
Wha—

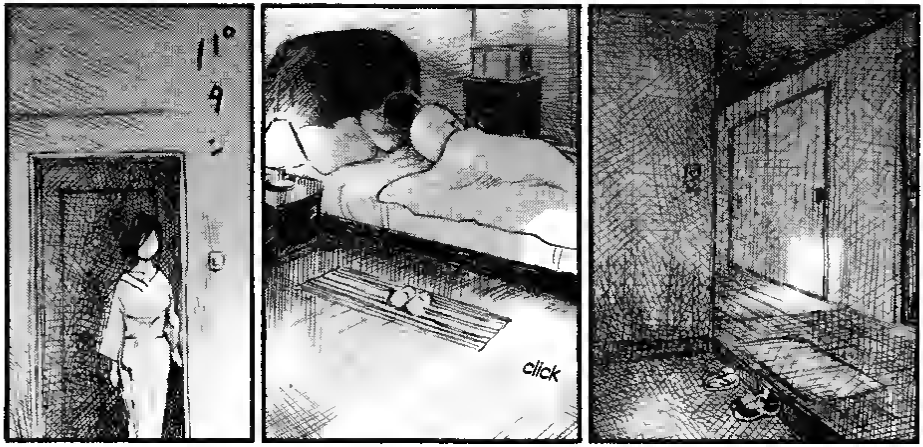
GOOD NIGHT.
I'LL TAKE A SHOWER.
YOU DID LIKE IT WHEN I USED MY SPIT, AFTERALL.
ER,
NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE EROTIC WOMEN...
UH...
I JUST WANTED TO SEE YOUR TROUBLED EXPRESSION.
DIDN'T YOU WAKE ME UP BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO DO IT?
...
IS THIS ALRIGHT?
110
Just now,

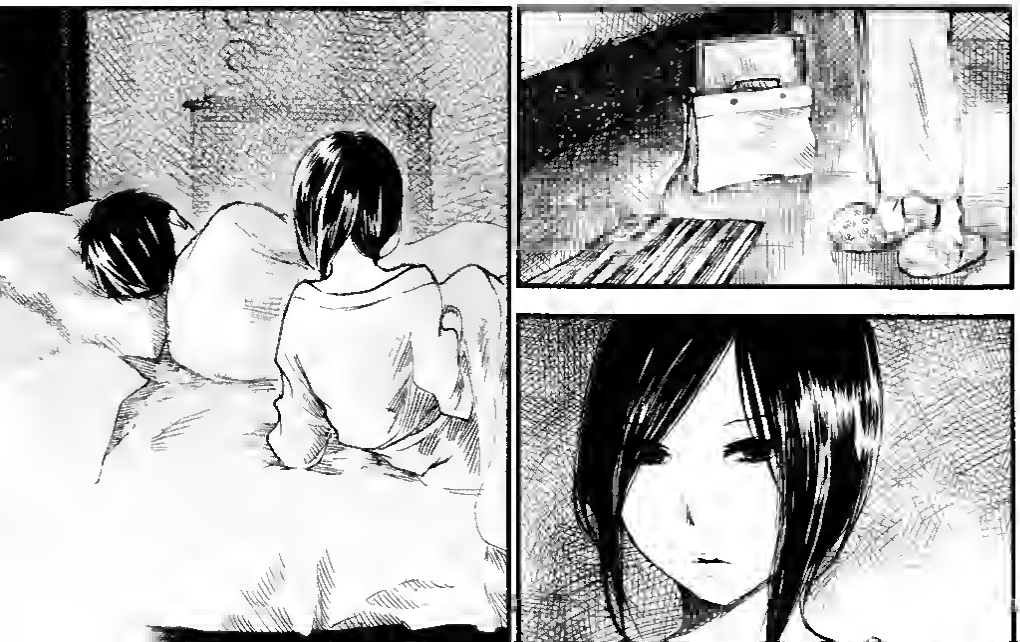
but why?





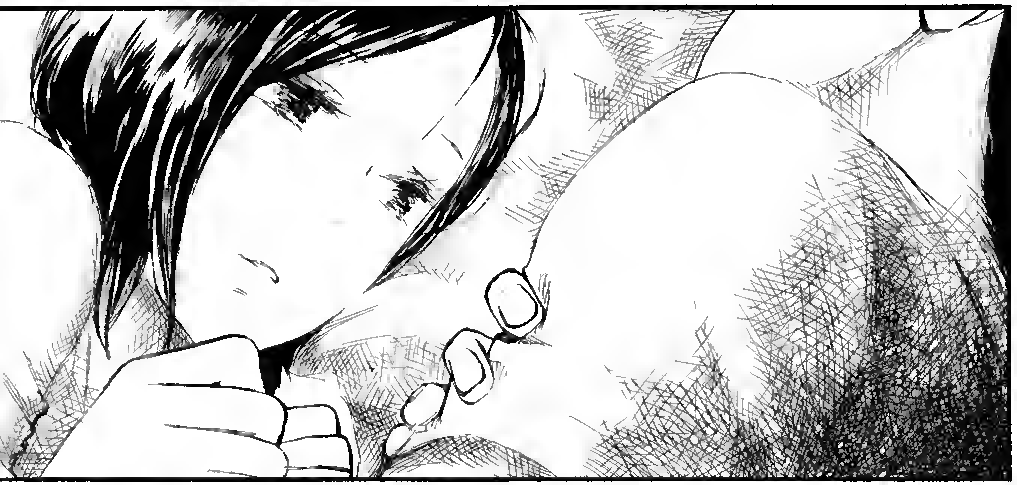



click

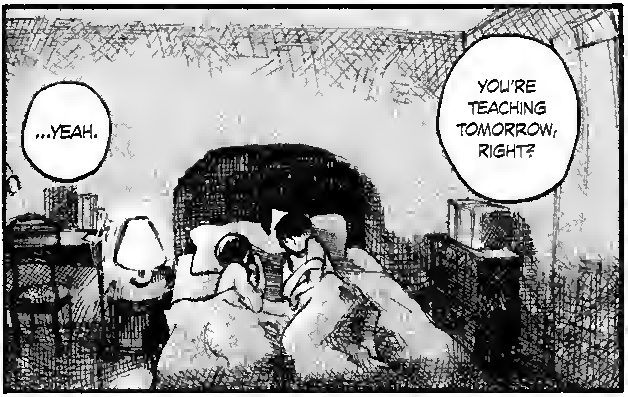


squeak
fidget

...

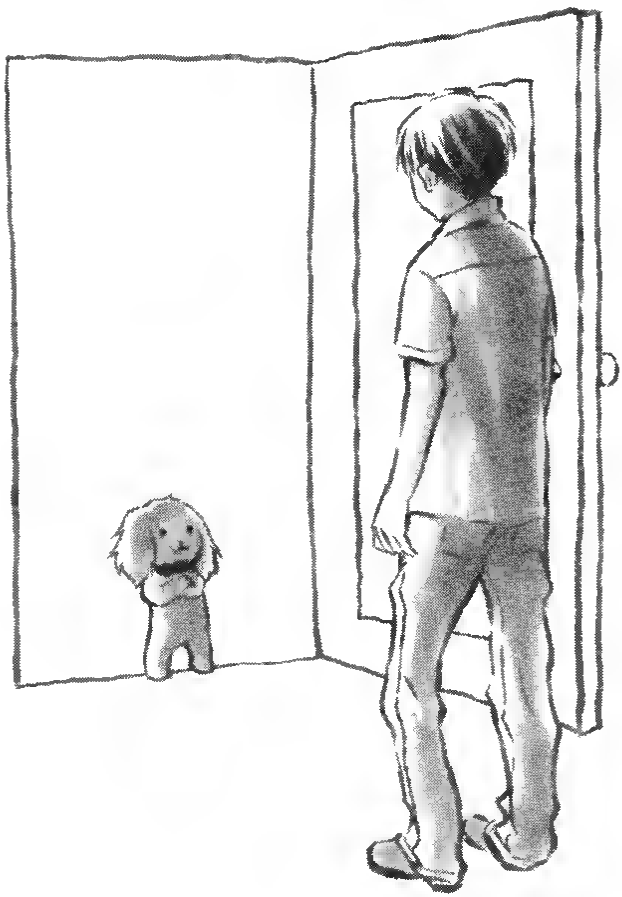


I'LL WAKE YOU UP.


...YEAH.
YOU'RE TEACHING TOMORROW, RIGHT?

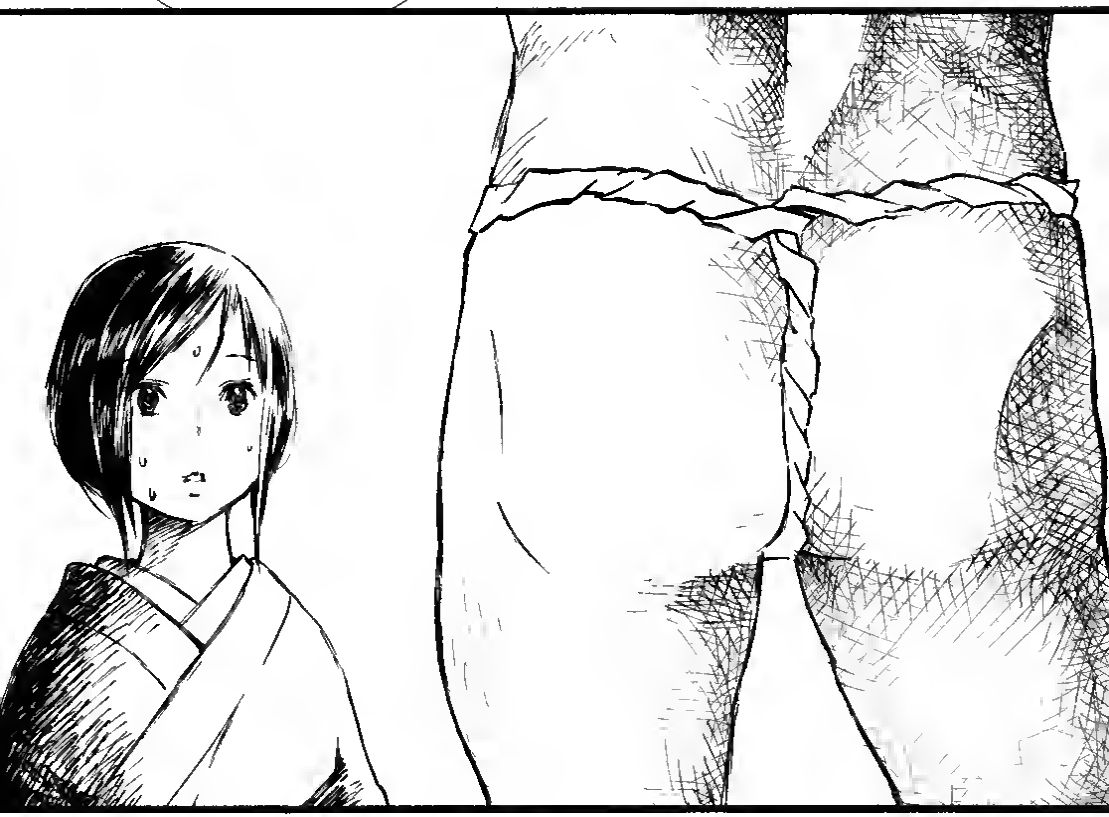
GOOD NIGHT
MM
モ
ミ

『夏の前日』④／おわり



[SENSUAL OMAKE MANGA]

CATERING TO EACH OTHER'S FETISHES

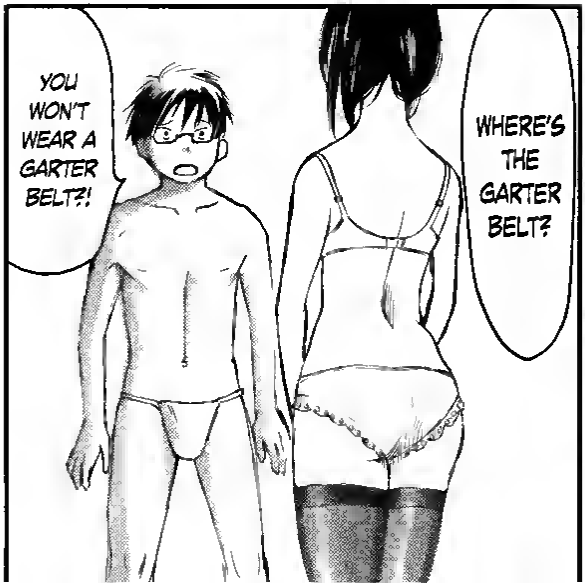


AAAAA
AHHHH
JUST A SEC.
I DID AS YOU ASK, OKAY? SO YOU HAVE TO DO AS YOU PROMISED, TOO.

WHAT KIND OF FETISH IS THIS?!
FIRST, THE GLASSES...
Slide
Slip
click
THIS IS EMBARASSING.
I'M THE EMBARASSED ONE HERE...

Smush
YOU'RE THE ONE THAT DRESSED ME THIS WAY.
WEARING GLASSES AND A FUNDOSHI TOGETHER MAKES YOU LOOK EXTRA PERVERTED.
Smush
Squeeze
Smush
Squeeze
Squeeze

HAAH
HAAH
HAAH
HAAH


YOU WON'T WEAR A GARTER BELT?!
WHERE'S THE GARTER BELT?

...
rub
rub
rub
rub
NOO~
THIS ISN'T WHAT YOU PROMISED!!
I'M LOSING ALL MY WILL TO DO THIS!!
NOOO~ I DON'T WANNA DO THIS ANYMORE!!
BA-DUMP♡
...YOUR NEW OUTFIT.
I'VE PREPARED IT...
THE NEXT DAY

—IS WHAT TETSUO THOUGHT.
This girl is kinda weird...
I will be a failing writer who decides to suicide by drowning. But then, you will save me in the water. Then, after you give me mouth-to-mouth you'll hold me in your arms, and our eyes will meet... And then——

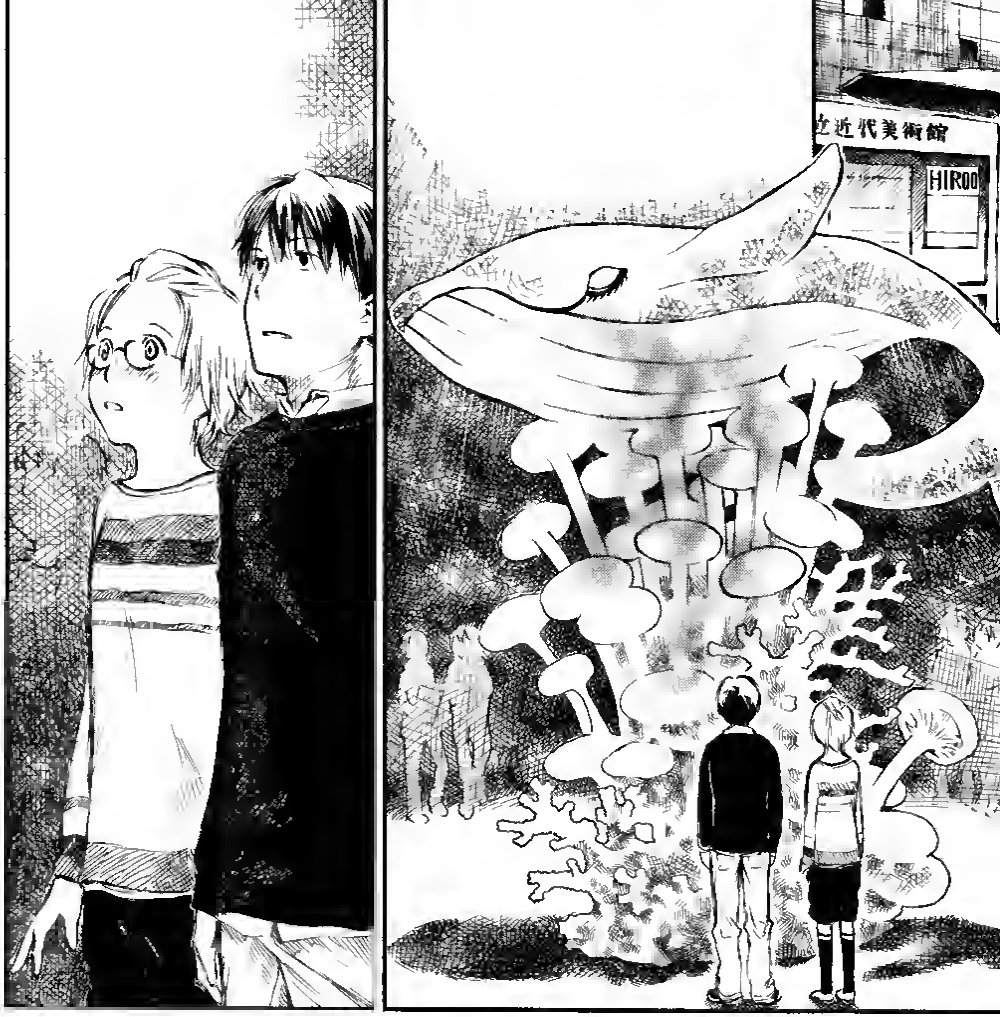
We'll see you next time!! Thanks for reading!!!

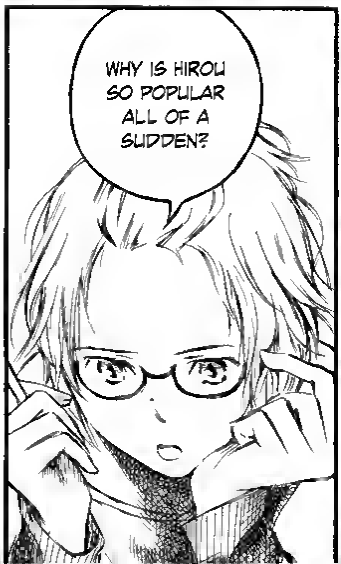
I WAS ALREADY A FEW DAYS INTO COLLEGE WHEN I FIRST NOTICED IT.
THERE WERE ALREADY SEVERAL CLIQUES THAT HAD FORMED AND I WASN'T IN ANY OF THEM.
How...
Well doesn't matter.
So everyone else can make friends just like that huh...
AOKI-KUN! YOUR SKETCH WAS THE ONE EVERYONE WAS PRAISING IN THE PEER REVIEW WASN'T IT?
From now on, I get to draw whatever I want to.
THE FIRST ONE TO TALK TO ME WAS INOUE

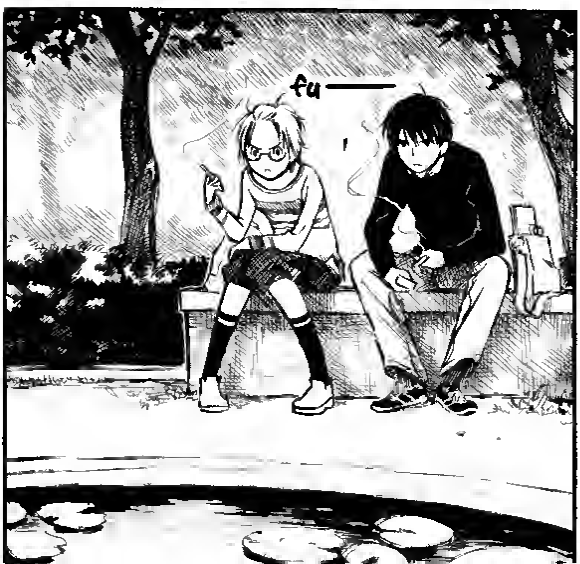
[SIDE STORY]

I'll show you a beautiful landscape!

Cafe Golden Canary
HOLD ON, I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING...
I WONDER IF SHE'S NEW HERE.
DID YOU SEE THAT? SHE'S SO CUTE!
PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME.
TICKETS "HIROU EXHIBIT"
ヒロオ展
JUST HOLD ON. I THREW THEM IN THE BAG AS SOON AS I GOT THEM FROM THE BOSS.
AH, HERE.
...ISN'T IT FINE? I WASN'T REALLY EVEN INTERESTED TO BEGIN WITH.


HIROO

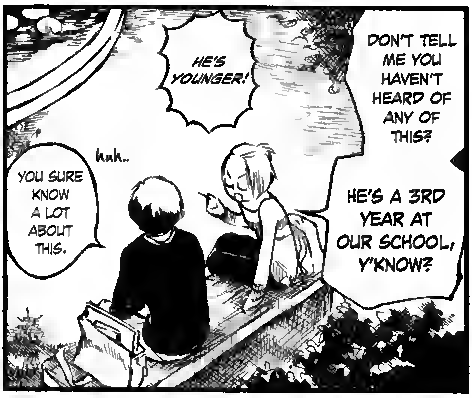

WHY IS HIROU SO POPULAR ALL OF A SUDDEN?


fu

?
IS IT?
popular..?
YOU REALIZE YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE UBIQUITOUS HIROU, RIGHT?!
HE JUST WROTE A BOOK RECENTLY. HE WAS EVEN FEATURED IN SOME MAGAZINE...
AND ON TOP OF THAT, HE'S STILL SO YOUNG...
AND WASN'T HE JUST NOW GETTING INTRODUCED ON THAT "SUNDAY ART EXHIBIT" TV SHOW?!

...I DON'T REALLY SEE IT.

...WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY HERE IS THAT...
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS GUY,
HE STILL MAKES IT INTO YOUR LIFE SOME WAY OR ANOTHER.


DON'T TELL ME YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF ANY OF THIS?
HE'S YOUNGER!
hnh..
YOU SURE KNOW A LOT ABOUT THIS.
HE'S A 3RD YEAR AT OUR SCHOOL, Y'KNOW?

clink
THE HECK IS THIS?
HIROU
Keyholder - Collection

WELL, THE STUFF WE SAW TODAY WAS INTERESTING.
...

It's just like Inoue said
I see
AOKI
REALLY...?
THAT THING SOLD A LOT TODAY.
IT'S BEEN POPPING UP A LOT LATELY.
scrape
scratch
AND MAYBE I'LL TRY DRAWING ALL OVER THE WHOLE PIECE!
NEXT TIME, I'LL TRY DRAWING ON A BIGGER PIECE OF PAPER!!
Sounds like fun!
"come alive"
Making a physical creation
Scratching it onto a blank space
...
...
....
Drawing with the care of a cat's tongue
scratch scratch
Bordered by tiny frames
And doing so all upon a mere piece of B4 sized paper

THAT'S MY INTENTION, YES...
I'D BE GREAT IF WE COULD MAKE IT ONTO A POPULARITY LIST NEXT TIME!
LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!
MAILMAN FROM THE TOWER
I'M... MAKING PROGRESS.
HOW'S THE MANUSCRIPT COMING ALONG?
THAT ARTIST THAT'S BEEN MAKING THE NEWS LATELY?
BY THE WAY, DO YOU KNOW MUCH ABOUT HIROU?
INOUE-SAN, PLEASE DO YOUR BEST TO BECOME AS FAMOUS AS THIS HIROU PERSON. AHAHA!
...
ISN'T IT NICE? THAT THERE'S SUCH A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE LIKE THAT?
WELL, THEY ATTEND HIE ART UNIVERSITY JUST LIKE YOU, SO I WAS WONDERING IF YOU KNEW THEM?
HM? WHAT ABOUT HIM SO SUDDENLY?
NO WAY.
I ONLY JUST SAW THEIR WORKS TODAY, ACTUALLY...

I DON'T GIVE A FUCK!!
SLAM
THIS NEW WASTEFUL AND EXTRAVAGANT CONSUMER CULTURE IS ALL THE RAGE NOW, ISN'T IT?! THEY JUST WANT SOMETHING CATCHY AND FLASHY, DON'T THEY?!
...
EVEN IF I SOLD AS MUCH, IT'S NOT LIKE I'D GET ANY KIND OF SPECIAL TREATMENT!!
IS THE ABILITY TO SELL THE SAME AS JUSTICE?! I REALLY GUESS SO!!
Aoki...
Augh
uu
WHAZ?!
EHZ?!
flood
Hold on a sec!
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE WE DRAW JUST TO COMPARE WITH OTHERS...

I LOVE HIROU'S WORK!
EH? HIROU?
HEY GUYS, WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT?
Piiiiii
You...

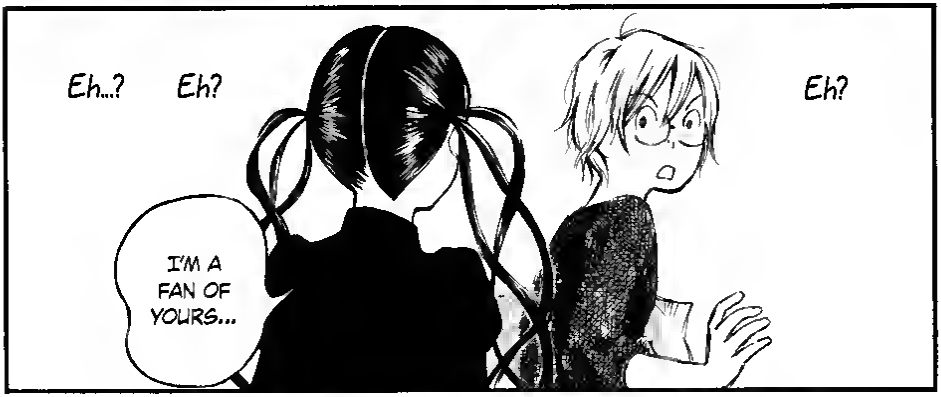
Why does everyone like his stuff so much?!
Hirou's ended up here too...

Cafe Golden Car

Guess I'll go home and work on the manuscript
...
Idea book

It's a curse!! A curse that follows me no matter where I go...

ARE YOU THE MANGA ARTIST INOUE ERIKO -SENSEI?!
UMM...
AH—
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THANKS FOR THE FOOD.


Eh...?
Eh?
Eh?
I'M A FAN OF YOURS...

I CAN'T TAKE NAPS AT THAT CAFE ANY-MOOOORE
WAAAAH
And stop with the "sensei"!!

How did she know?
Auto-graph
ン

My own art is mine to create.
That's right

IT WASN'T THAT HIROU APPEARED WHEREVER I WENT...
It's because
I had been looking and caring too much about it.

HIROU AGAIN,
HUH?
...
Who even cares about how Hirou does, anyway?

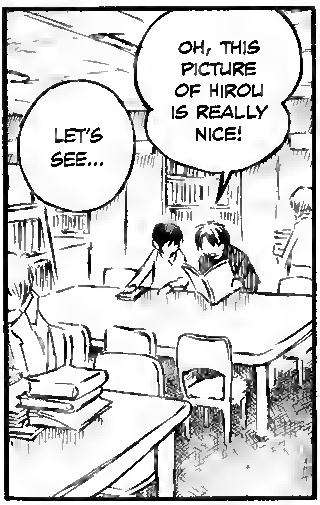
It was ENVY.
I'LL DRAW UNTIL I BLEED!
I'LL WORK HARD!
I'll show you a beautiful landscape!
What am I even saying?
That's a lie
Completely wrong
I HATE YOU.
SHIT!
HIROU, YOU...

Watch out!
Woah!
Here, here!
In truth,
I thought you were brilliant.
It's still further up ahead!
Over here, over here!

dong~

ding~

Library



DO YOU HAVE ANY FRIENDS IN SCULPTURE CLASSES, AOKI?
...HM?
ART
NEXT
GEE, SORRY.
YOU'VE GOT NO FRIENDS, ANYWAY.
...YEAH, DIDN'T THINK SO.
WHY DO YOU ASK?
I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH HIROU!

I SAID "FRIEND"!! I WANNA BE THEIR FRIEND!!
WHAT, SO YOU WANNA FIND THEM AND BEAT 'EM UP?
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE HE'D EVEN KNOW WHO I AM...
GOD, IT'S SO FRUS-TRATING!
I THINK I WOULD REALLY LIKE THAT KIND OF PERSON...
I'M INTERESTED IN THE PERSON THAT COULD PRODUCE SUCH ART.
I WANT TO MEET HIM AND TALK.
ONCE I FIGURED OUT MY FEELINGS, IT WAS A HUGE RELIEF.
I WONDER IF THEY'RE COMPLETELY OUT OF MY REACH...
EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE IN THE SAME SCHOOL,
ART

*1 NOTE: UP UNTIL NOW "HIROU" HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN KATAKANA (ヒロウ) WHERE "HIROU" HERE IS HER PROPER KANJI NAME (弘生)

IS THIS THAT SO-CALLED MU-MU-MU-MU MUTUAL LOVE?!
OH GOD, WHAT DO I DO?! THIS IS CRAZY, MAN!
NO WAY, RIGHT? YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT?!
For Hirou Ewi-san
Inoue Eriko
I EVEN WROTE IT ON THE AUTO-GRAPH
IT WAS HER LAST NAME!!
AAH
BUT "HIROU" IS
calm down...
GYAAAA SHE CAME OUT

EH?!
WHY ME?!
AOKI-KUN, GO AND TALK TO HER...
HIROU IS MINE!!
What is she on about...
WAIT!!!! NONONONONONO!! IF THE KIND-OF BARELY-HANDSOME -LOOKING-FROM -THE-OUTSIDE AOKI-KUN TALKS TO HER, IT'D BE DANGEROUS!!!
...IS THAT OKAY?
IT'S NOT!
AH! SHE'S GOING BACK INSIDE!
CAN I GO HOME NOW?
Sigh~
AS FAMOUS AS SHE IS, SHE EVEN GALLANTLY WORKS A PART-TIME JOB...

Ah...
DO YOU THINK SHE'D BE MY FRIEND?
I wonder if she was also really nervous
when she first came and talked to me, too
...
gulp
WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO UP AND SAY "I WANT TO BE FRIENDS WITH YOU!"?
Uhehe~
NOBODY JUST COMES OUT AND SAYS THAT!
!?
shock
YOU'RE TERRIBLE AT THIS, AREN'T YOU?

THANKS A LOT!
I'LL FIGURE IT OUT!
GO FOR IT.